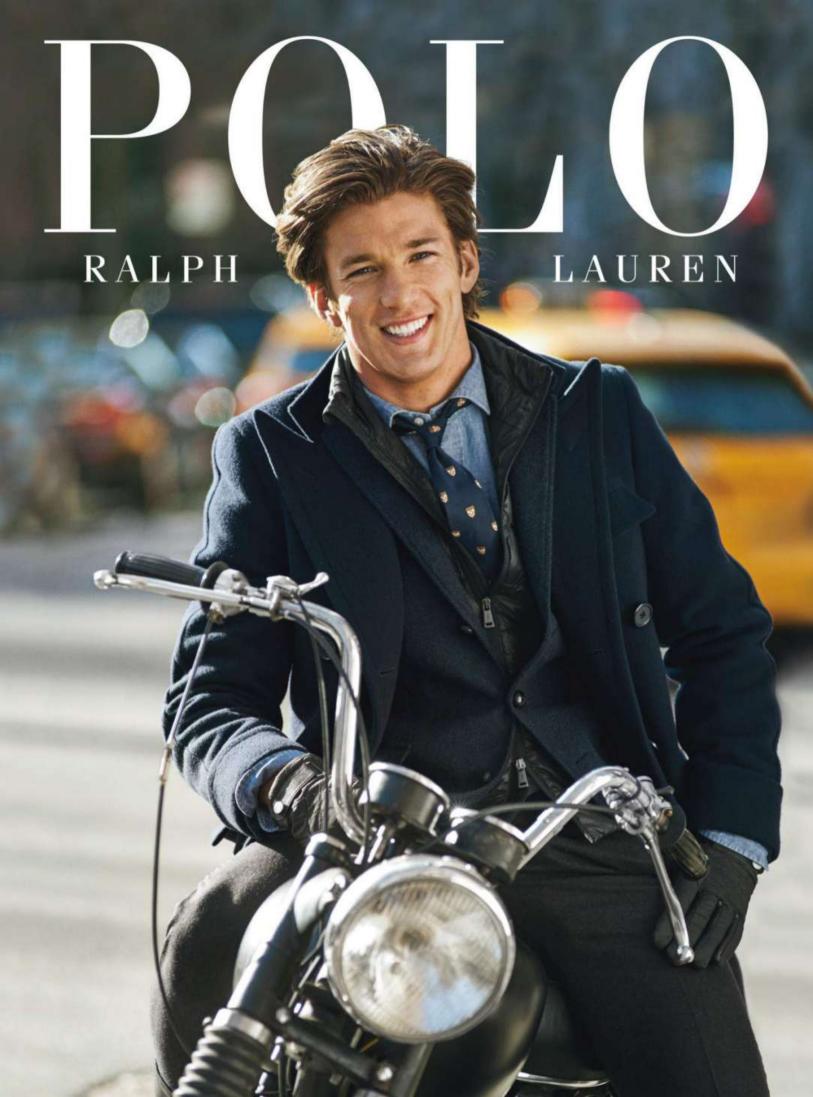
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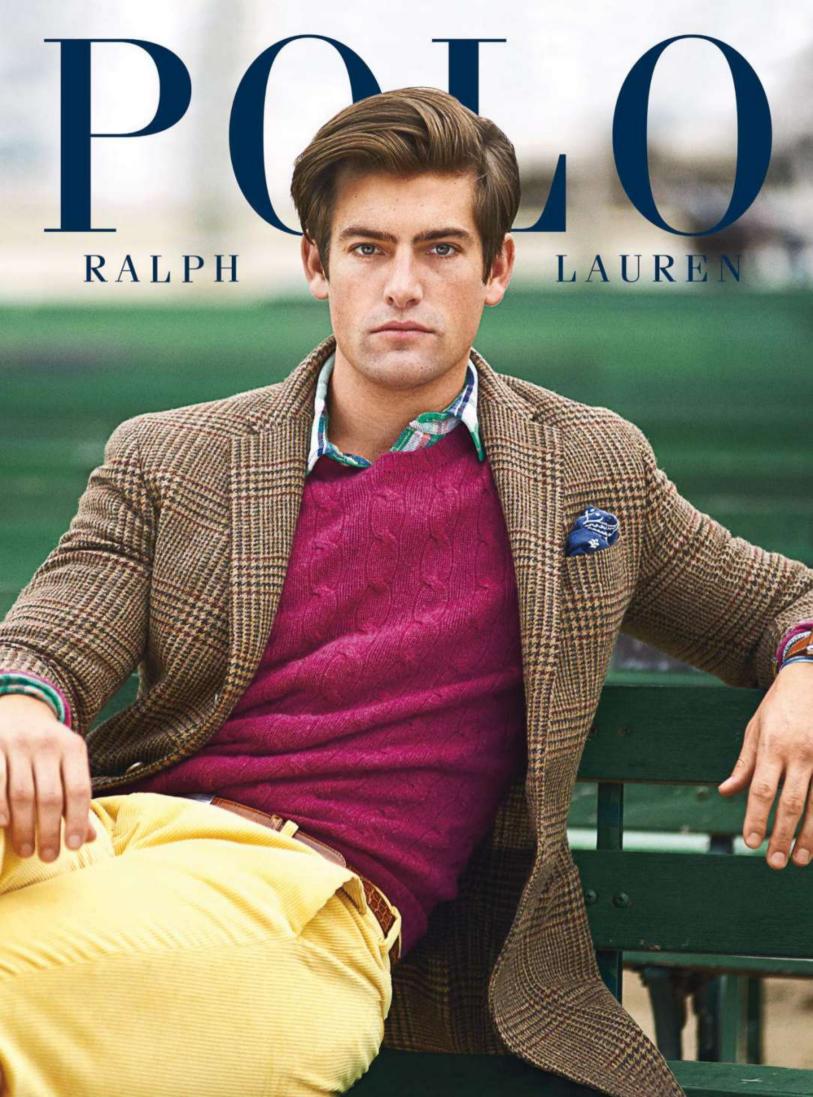
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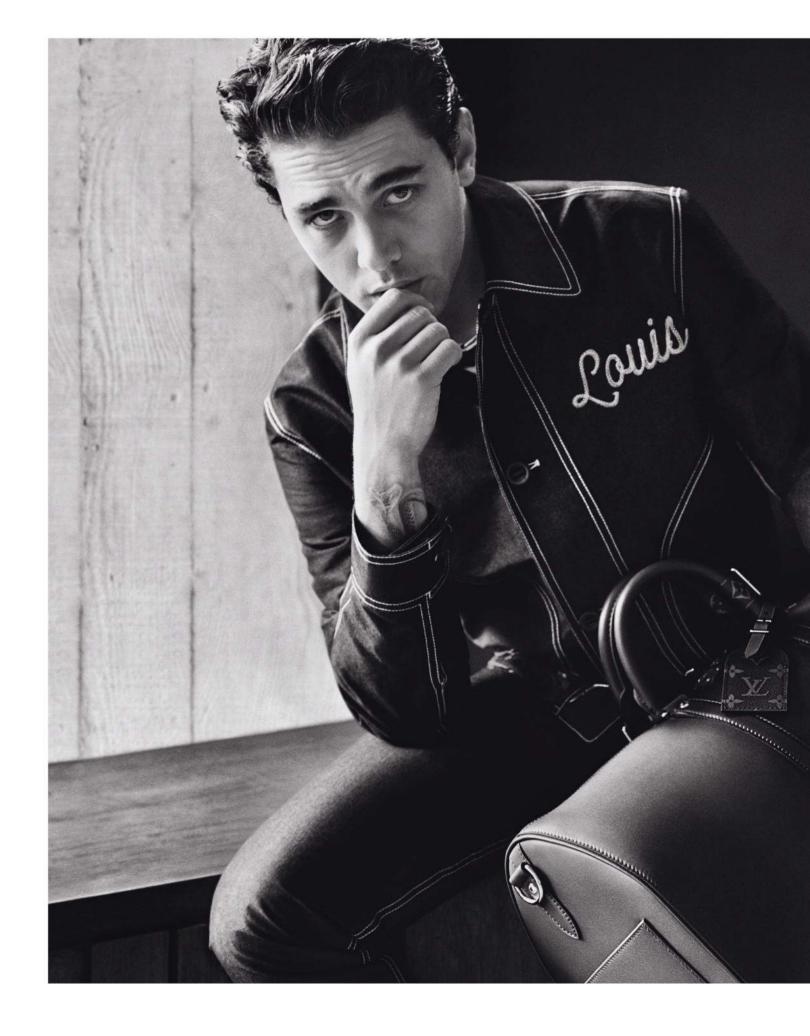






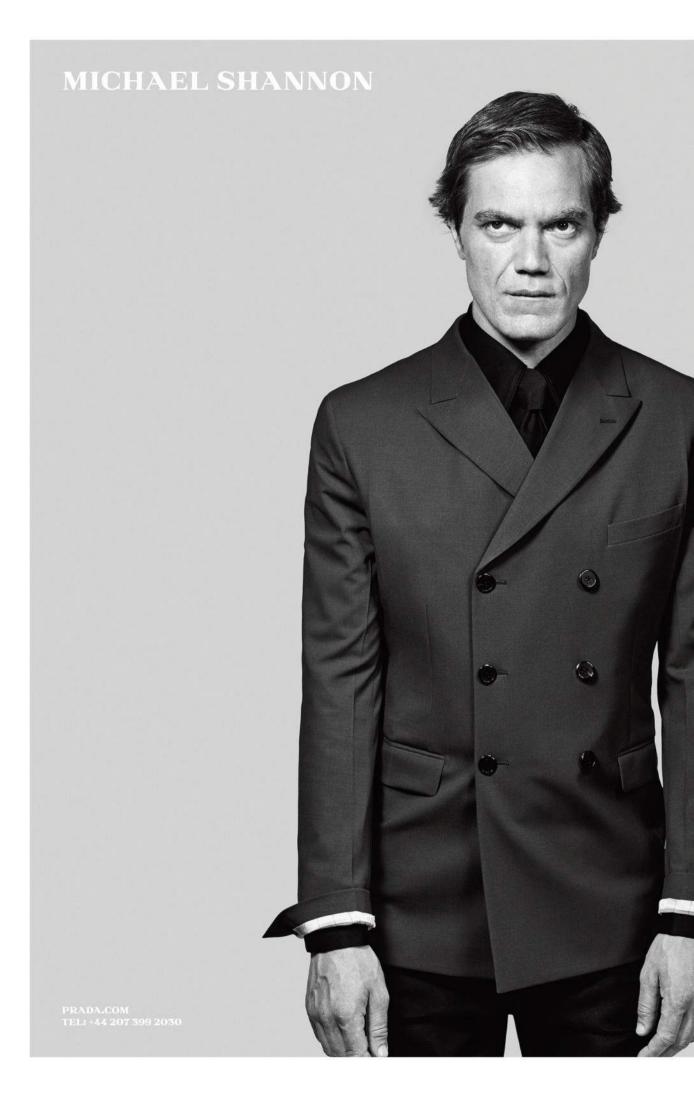








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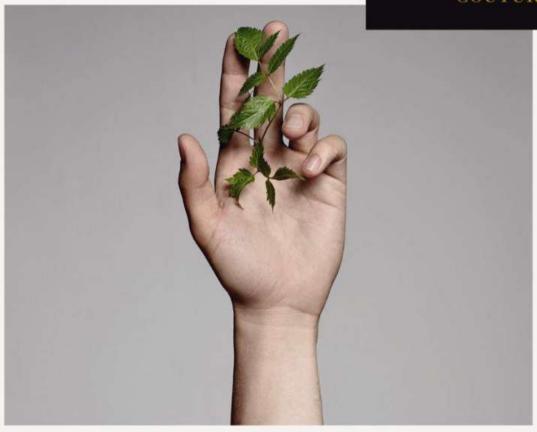
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JAMES BOND'S CHOICE





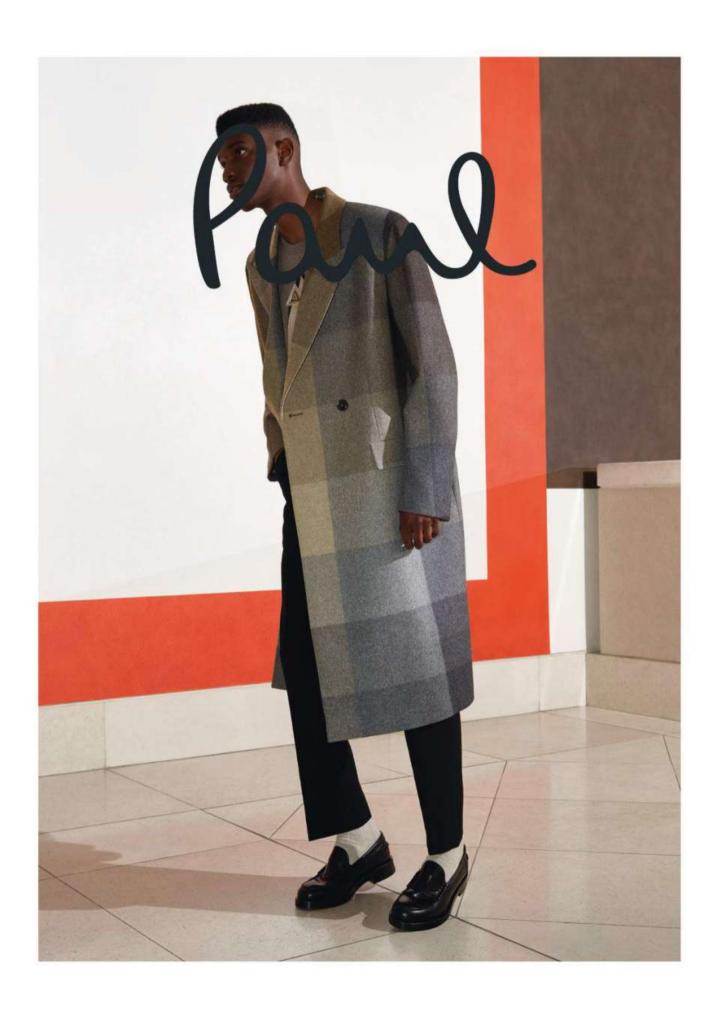
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COVERS





Daniel Craig

Photographs Greg Williams
Daniel Craig wears Newsstand and
subscriber editions: Light grey silkcotton jacket; white cotton shirt; navy/
silver-spotted silk tie; light grey silk-cotton
trousers, all by Giorgio Armani. Seamaster
Aqua Terra 41.5mm watch, by Omega

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The Alfred Dunhill Duke holdall

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Tom Parker Bowles

"I knew little about Taiwan, save that lots of stuff was made there when I was growing up," says our food editor, who reports from there in this month's Esquire Eats section, starting on page 144. "But I was blown away by Taipei's charm, warmth and some of the most thrilling grub I've eaten in my life, especially the beef noodles and slow-cooked chicken soups." Parker Bowles' latest book, Let's Eat Meat (Pavilion), is out now.

Will Self

"My relationship with food was already twisted," says Self. "But that was before I slurped total food substitute Soylent. I once thought meals would be coming in pill form by 2015; instead they are milkshakes, and as you glug it down you feel your stomach turning. How nauseating is that?" The contributing editor, who ate the concoction for five days so you don't have to (page 160), is working on a new novel, Phone.

Tim Lewis

It took Lewis three lunches to get to the core of the owner of the acclaimed Indian restaurant Gymkhana. "Karam Sethi has an insatiable appetite for talking about and eating food," says the contributing editor, who profiles him on page 144. "In New York, he went to 40 restaurants in three days: he'd have a 'tactical chunder' to go to more. Thankfully, it didn't reach that point with us." Lewis is a features writer at The Observer.

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Esquire

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Will Storr

"Dylan Evans was a candid interviewee," says the contributing editor, who on page 196 meets a man whose utopian vision of self-sufficiency descended into real-life dystopia. "Not just unusually intelligent, but willing to self-analyse and discuss personal flaws that let this be more than just a madcap yarn." Storr's most recent book, *The Heretics: Adventures with the Enemies of Science* (Picador), is available now.

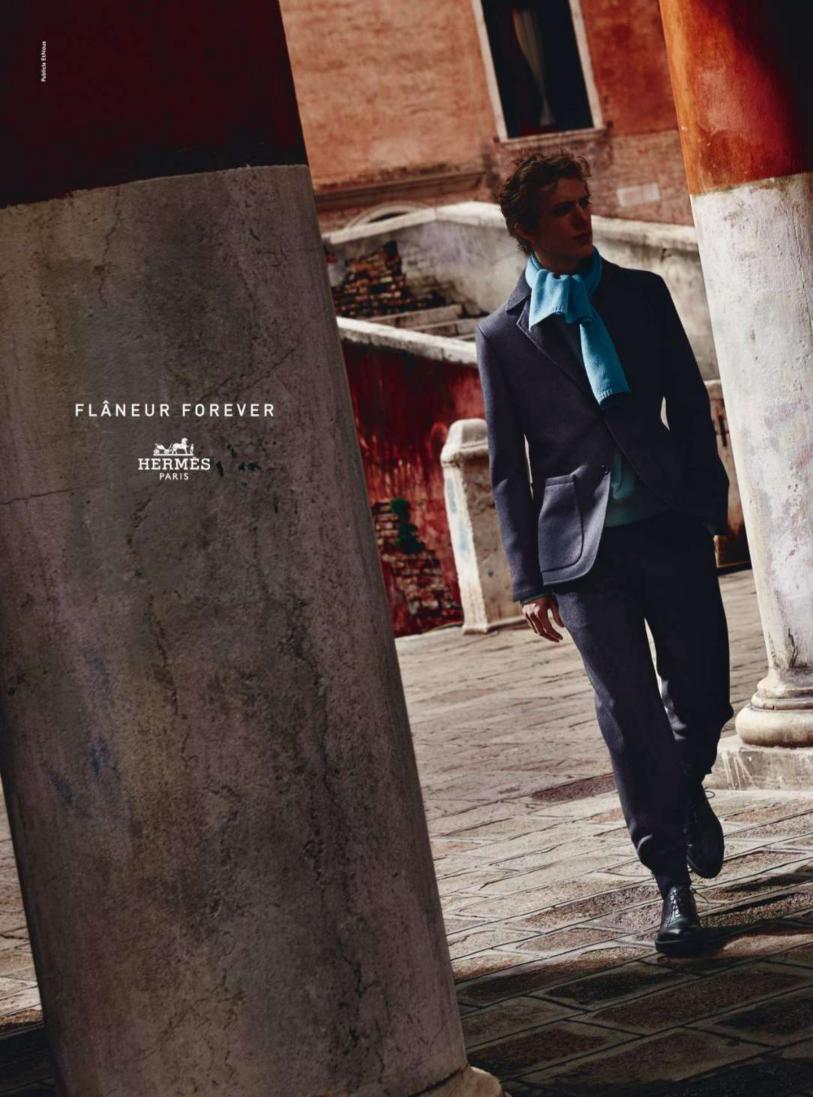
Greg Williams

"I first shot Daniel Craig back in 2004 for Layer Cake," the Esquire regular tells us, "but I hadn't seen him in over a year before this cover. It was like shooting an old friend — a very relaxed, black and white, reportage shoot." Williams also contributes to Vanity Fair, Details and L'Uomo Vogue. He is currently developing a debut feature film, Samarkand, starring Tom Hardy.

Gareth Scourfield

The Esquire contributing fashion editor is used to styling Daniel Craig. "He is a man who knows what he likes, as long as it comes in black or navy. His style no-nos are the flapping of a tie outside of his jacket, short socks and fussy shoes, and anything in a primary colour or garish pattern. A decent bloke with decent style sense, who gets all the British quirks attached to dressing well."











J.CREW

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Alexis Petridis

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Rachel Fellows

Stephanie Crain

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Will Hersey

DEPUTY EDITOR Sam Parker

DIGITAL EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Jacob Stolworthy

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CONTRIBUTING FASHION EDITORS

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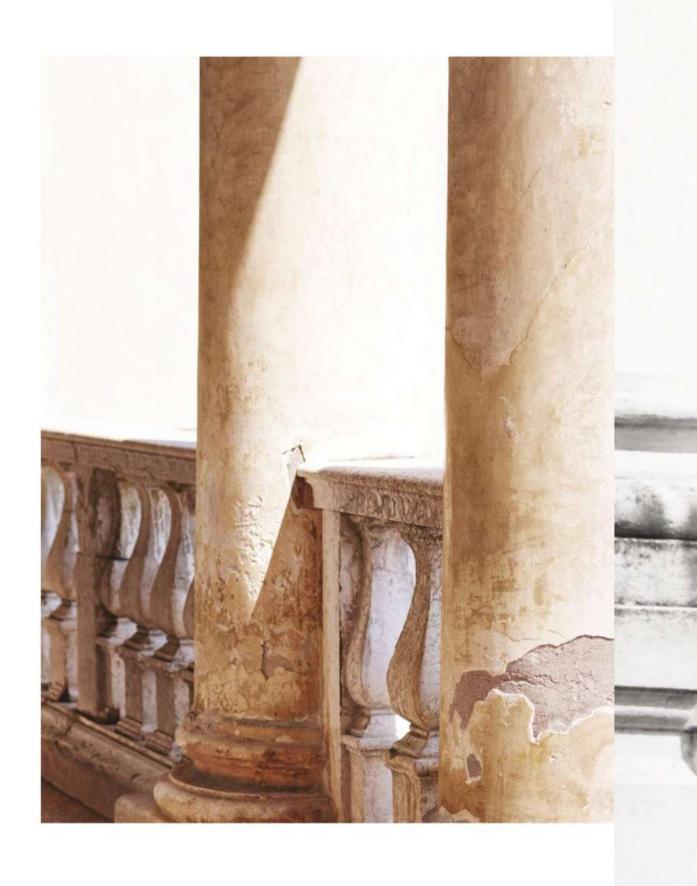


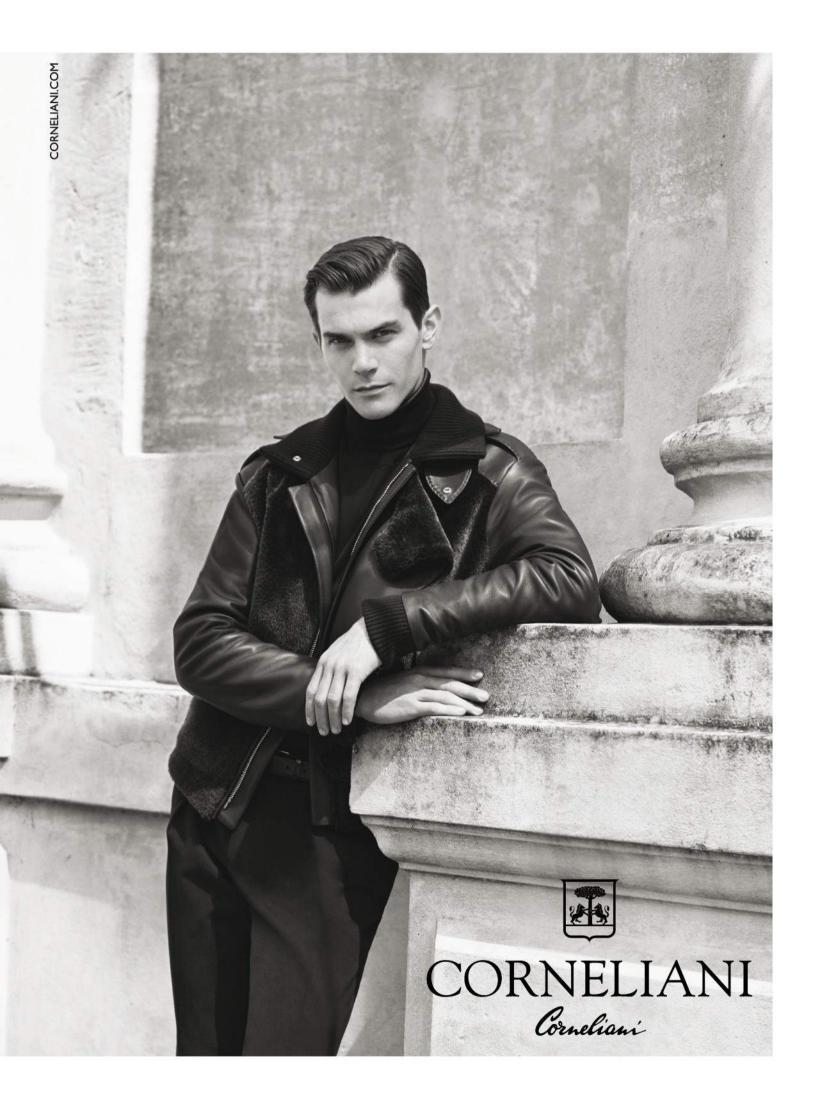


















EDITOR'S LETTER

BELIEVE IT OR NOT WE DO TRY, HERE AT ESQUIRE, not to go in for triumphalist trumpet blowing or excessive, narcissistic self-regard. Honest, we do. We try really, really hard.

But sometimes, gentle reader, we fail. This month, I'm afraid to say, is one of those occasions. So if you are on the whole, and quite rightly, allergic to shameless self-promotion and egregious back-slapping, flamboyant fist bumping, hearty high-fiving and all the rest of it, then I urge you to skip straight to the paragraph a bit further down, beginning with the sentence: "But enough of that unseemly preening..."

Still here? Don't say I didn't warn you.

I've written before in this space about awards, and especially awards ceremonies: the morality-shredding meretriciousness of them, obviously, but more than that the knuckle-gnawing boredom and toe-curling mortification of them. All that warm white vino collapso, all that irradiated beef, all those awful outfits, all those endless speeches, all those mirthless topical "jokes" told by all those Z-list comperes. Of course, it's easy to be cynical and jaded and snobby about awards — believe me, it really is — until you win one. At those moments, they seem like a very good idea indeed. Suddenly, the plonk tastes sweeter, the flambéed fish-chicken dish seems tastier, and the fact that you are dressed like a provincial hotel waiter ceases to be a cause for discomfort or concern. You are a winner. In a cummerbund, true. But still a winner.

The PPA Writer of the Year is the most prestigious award for journalism in British magazines and in the four years we've been eligible for it, since we rebooted *Esquire* in 2011, we've won it three times. Will Self won it for his writing in *Esquire* in 2012, Tim Lewis won in 2014, and, in July of this year, Will Self won again. (Let's pretend 2013 didn't happen, shall we?)

In the same period we received more nominations for PPA writing awards than any other magazine — men's, women's or Horse & Hound. That Esquire dream team in full: Sanjiv Bhattacharya (twice), Giles Coren (twice), Johnny Davis, Dan Davies, AA Gill (three times!) and Jeremy Langmead have all, since 2012, been shortlisted for PPAs for their writing in Esquire.

zines! Commission some decent words why don't you? But actually I'm not embarrassed. It's gratifying when good work is recognised and rewarded, and all those mentioned have, over the past few years, supplied Esquire — and you — with elegant, incisive, witty, irreverent journalism. Long may they continue to do so.

That said, the writing isn't, I hope, the only strength of Esquire. (And these aren't the only awards we've won in this period. Heavens, no! We've also won gongs for design, digital, sub-editing, land-

It's almost embarrassing, isn't it? I mean, come on other maga-

scape gardening and, I believe, cake baking.)

Another thing we pride ourselves on: getting the big exclusive interviews that others can only gnash their teeth and stamp their

feet about — before hastily cobbling together a spoiler.

As I think I've mentioned in the interview on page 164 — possibly more than once — this is not the first time Daniel Craig has appeared on the cover of *Esquire*. In fact, since that 2011 reboot, this is his third appearance. The last time was in the autumn of 2012 when he was promoting *Skyfall*, his third film as James Bond, which went on to gross more than \$1bn worldwide, almost double

the best of any previous Bond, and become the most successful film of any kind to date at the British box office.

Daniel and his team chose *Esquire* for the exclusive Bond photoshoot and interview on that occasion and they've done so again, for *Spectre*, the new movie, which will be released in British cinemas on 26 October.

You can make of that decision what you will. But I must say I feel quite flattered about the fact that just as James Bond chooses Aston Martin for his wheels, Omega for his wristwatch and Belvedere vodka for his martini, so he chooses *Esquire* for his men's magazine.

You may see Daniel on the cover of other glossy monthlies in the weeks and months to come but only *Esquire* gets its own, straight-from-the-secret-agent's-mouth insight into the making of the most anticipated blockbuster of the season.

Those of you who, like 007, enjoy top-notch writing will, I hope, find plenty of that in this issue, too. Both Will Self and Tim Lewis contribute to our special Esquire Eats section, alongside our globe-

trotting food editor, Tom Parker Bowles. Tim also conducts a very lively interview with the pre-eminent American novelist of the day, Jonathan Franzen. Our columnists AA Gill and Jeremy Langmead are in their usual places, alongside Russell Norman. Will Storr, another fine *Esquire* writer, has a remarkable story about one man's utopian dream slash massive midlife crisis. (Aren't all midlife crises utopian dreams? Maybe so.) And, of course, we offer everything you would expect in the way of cars and culture, fashion and fitness, sport and style, gadgets and grooming.

But enough of that unseemly preening... Oh, dear. Out of space. Shame.



Our kind of spy: Daniel Craig as James Bond in the forthcoming Spectre

Alex Bilmes Editor-in-Chief

"I'm flattered that just as 007 chooses Aston Martin for his car, Omega for his watch and Belvedere for his martini, so he chooses Esquire for his magazine"









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AA Gill is Esquire's

UNCLE DYSFUNCTIONAL

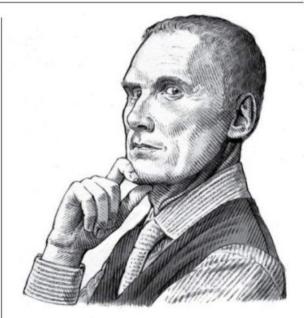
This month, our sultan of sagacity plots out a cinematic bollock-buster, goes in to bat for trans persons, and tackles the tricky taboos of overage sex

Dear Uncle Dysfunctional,

It was my girlfriend's turn to choose the film. Last time, I took her to see Mad Max: Fury Road, which she said wasn't a proper date film. But it had loads of girl shit in it: pregnancy, romance, tits. Anyway, she made me watch the cartoon movie about the inside of some girl's head. What's all that about? I have no idea why anyone would want to see this movie, or why they'd want to show it to children. What's wrong with Ninja Turtles? But my girlfriend loved it — sobbed a river and said I was a typical man. And what's wrong with that? I've been aiming at typical masculinity all my life. Bryan, Knutsford

Dear Bryan,

I feel your dude pain in a sort of lumpy, blokey way. By the time your letter gets printed I expect they'll have launched the sequel. For those of you — the single reader — who have managed to avoid Inside Out, the premise is that our emotions are run by emoticon homunculi: joy, sadness, disgust, anger and then some other bloke who I didn't really make sense of. Indecision or anxiety, or something. Anyway, as I had to sit through it, to keep myself from punching the people behind I tried to imagine the Esquire Uncle Dysfunctional version of this movie. It would be about the two quite cute little emoticons that live in your scrotum: The Ball Brothers, The Testy Twins. Sort of Dumb and Dumber. Two young, working-class farm workers who spend their lives breeding and herding semen. They like their work and they care a lot about their sperm family. But the bane of their life is Dick Bellend, who lives next door. Every night, Dickie comes down and rustles the sperm, and every morning The Ball Brothers wake up and their flock has been shot into a sock. That Bellend is a proper wanker, a cocky bastard, and he's been getting above himself. So, together they start to work out how to make him fall in love, turn gay or become impotent. I can't work out which. It'll be a brilliant movie. I can see it now. The Bollock Brothers



will be played by Matthew McConaughey and Tom Hardy. And Dickie Bellend is obviously Benedict Cumberbatch. There might be an opening for an arsehole, and I'm thinking Ray Winstone.

Dear Uncle Dysfunctional,

I just got into trouble for tweeting that my mate's mum looks like a tranny. Now I've got to go into hiding.

George, Salford

Dear George,

You have fallen foul of the current nomenclature trend. This is serious. You need to keep up. You can't say, write or, indeed, think tranny any more. Tranny is a pejorative and derogative hate word, it is the sort of language that intimidates those in our society who are the most vulnerable: young men and women who feel that they have been mislabelled with the wrong ingredient. Just imagine



how brave you have to be to tell your family, grandparents, school friends, the other members of the mosque, that you are, in fact, not the gender appearing on your Tinder account, but the opposite. Exactly. These people are in the most topsy-turvy, uncertain, vulnerable position it's possible for a human to find themselves in, and before they can realign their own jewellery requirements and genitals, they should be able to choose what they call themselves. And, at the time of going to press, the accepted term is "trans", a trans-person. Now you may say, "Trans, tranny. Fuck it, what's the difference?" Well, it makes a difference to them. It's their name, they get to choose. So remember: it's trans. That's tranny with the little curly bit cut off the end.

Dear Uncle Dysfunctional,

I got my girlfriend pregnant when we were both 15. That was 17 years ago. My daughter's just brought home her boyfriend, who's two years older than I am. I think this is completely unacceptable. She says it's fine because she's nearly 18 and he's in his thirties, and it's not her fault that I was an underage child molester that got her mum up the duff (we're no longer together). And I take her point. But this is all sorts of creepy wrong. And he keeps calling me dad and laughing. And the worst thing is that we were at the same school, but obviously he was two years above me, and was a fucking bully. Stanley, Jaywick

Dear Stanley,

As *The Bible* says, "As you sow, so shall you pay child maintenance". The short answer is: you can't begin to have any say in who your children get off with. Unless that's an intrinsic part of your religion or culture, in which case obviously then that trumps love, sex and self-determination.

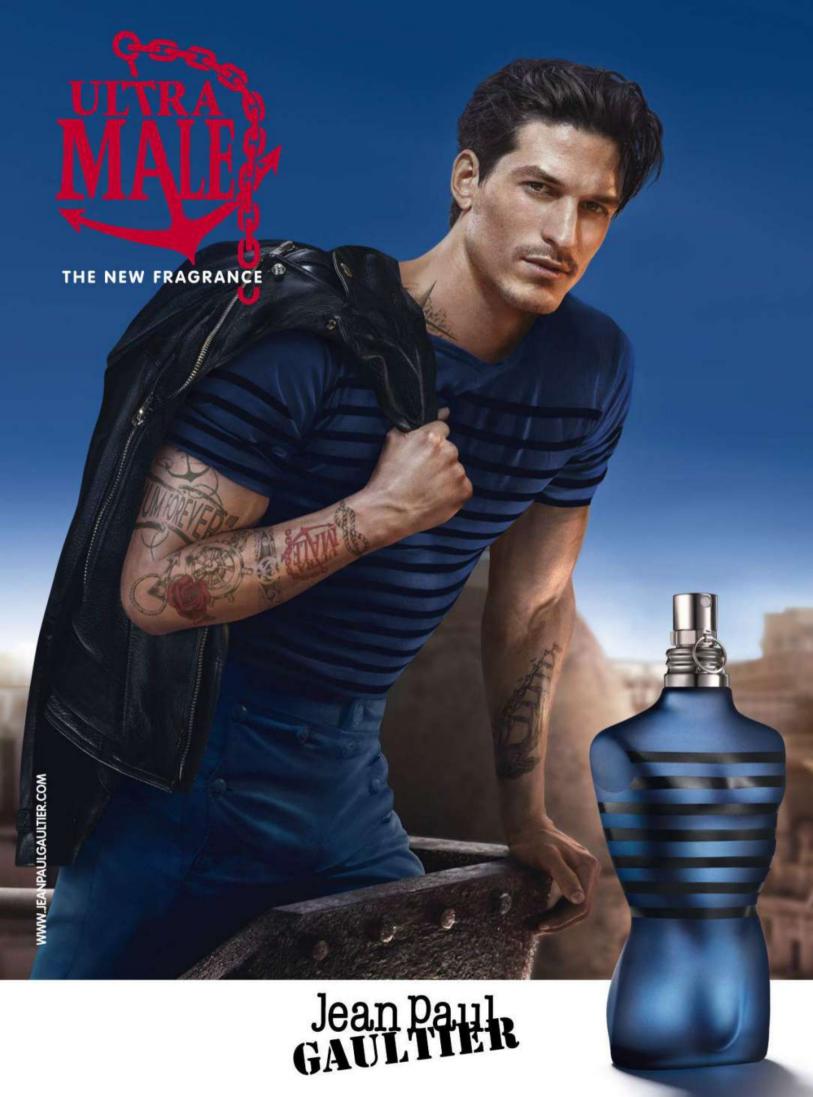
Marrying someone more successful than your father is an important evolutionary step for a girl. Most girls see even a few years younger than them as unacceptable

The generally accepted algorithm for appropriate coupling is half the older partner's age plus seven. So, she's a bit off the reservation but not massively. You don't mention any of this guy's other qualities. Is he more successful than you? More socially adept? Is he better looking than you? I'm guessing that part of the problem is that he's not someone you can patronise or intimidate, which is an important part of the father-boyfriend relationship. On the other hand, marrying someone more successful than your father is an important social evolutionary step for a girl. What is strange is that if you asked your daughter if she would go out with a 15-year-old, she'd pull a face and say that's disgusting. Most girls see even a few years younger than them as unacceptable. But quite a lot older is perfectly agreeable. This is not an aesthetic or social choice. It's not because older men are better companions, are more sophisticated, are politer or have better conversation, or are more accomplished fornicators. It's a biological choice: they are more likely to be stable, established accomplished mates, and that will make them more trustworthy and adept fathers. You could look at your daughter bringing home a man of your age as being a compliment for your own record as a dad, which is more than could be said for her mother's choice of baby-daddy, and I bet her parents weren't at all thrilled when she came home with you. 2











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Esquire Style

Fashion / Grooming / Tech / Food / Cars Edited by Teo van den Broeke

Pick of the mix

How to order or make the ultimate timeless cocktail

→ You don't get much more classic than a martini. The marker of many ingredients but it lays down

bartender at The Savoy's award-

SAVOY MARTINI

Vermouth; dash of orange bitters; twist

Gin or vodka?

The gin

EL: "You should use London dry, definitely. Along with the dominant juniper, you then have citrus and some savoury notes, like coriander. I use Bombay Sapphire."

The vermouth

A fortified wine steeped with botanicals (much like gin – hence the great combination). EL: "It can be French or Italian but always dry for a traditional martini. I use Cocchi extra dry."



Bitters

EL: "Lots of people forget the bitters, but they were in the original formula. If you want an understanding of martini, the evolution started with the marguerite, which was first mentioned in print in 1896; that was gin, vermouth and a few drops of orange bitters."



Shaken or stirred?

Shaking produces a colder but more diluted result as the ice breaks down into the martini. It also makes for a frothy, cloudy looking drink. Stirring leaves the temperature a point or two higher but you get a silkier effect. Lorincz recommends 35-40 stirs, or 15 seconds of shaking with good-quality ice.



More vermouth means a wetter martini. Standard ratios of gin-tovermouth are 2:1 for wet, and 4:1 for dry. Churchill only required the vermouth to be present in the room rather than the glass, but "that's just cold gin and lemon".



A twist of lemon freshens things up. Beware huge chunks sunk in the bottom of the glass, or twists sitting on the rim that fail to infuse any flavour. You want a dainty slice of peel. squeezed over the glass to release a fine spritz of flavour ("like you're doing a magic trick"), but "it should be very small so that by the time vou finish vour martini. it won't have had time to absorb all the acidity – that's not very pleasant." Other citrus fruits also work well. Try grapefruit with Tanqueray No 10 gin, as that's one of the botanicals in the blend.



EL: "Make sure it's not too big, or halfway through drinking it's already warm. Once you come to the last sip, it should still be nice and cold. I use a Baccarat glass. Keep it cold in the freezer."



A certain ratio

Esquire's martini guide

GIBSON

Garnished with a cocktail onion: "Good if you like things very salty." Lorincz says.

VESPER

First seen in Casino Royale, it uses three measures of gin, one of vodka and a half of Kina Lillet or, these days, Cocchi Americano.

DIRTY

A dry martini with olive brine or juice. Lorincz recommends crushing four olives at the bottom of a shaker, then adding other ingredients.

MONTGOMERY

Named after the WWII Field Marshal. it's at the driest end of the scale with a 15:1 ratio. "Good if you've missed your flight," Lorincz says.

PERFECT

Uses equal parts of sweet and dry vermouth, within whatever ratio to the gin you choose.

OBITUARY

From New Orleans: add a few dashes of absinthe.





GIUSEPPE HOMME GIUSEPPE ZANOTTI DESIGN Fall-Winter 2015



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while charging.

£330, boots.com

actions per minute.

The four cutting

Trimmer by Wahl

Admittedly, all of the shavers on this page offer impressive levels of juice, but none rival the Lithium Blitz by salon staple Wahl. A one-hour charge powers it up for 240 minutes (which is three months' use on average) and plugging it in for one minute will give you three for shaving. £90, wahlglobal.com

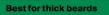
Best for versatility StyleShaver by Philips

Philips' waterproof StyleShaver has a doublefoil shaver, 12 length-adjustable beard cutter and rotating precision trimmer for those hard-to-reach spots. £90, selfridges.com

Make the cut

The Esquire rundown of the world's best electric shavers

→ Gone are the days of loud, overheating, quick-to-blunt shavers that wrench hairs from the skin and run out of battery before you've reached your moustache. Now we have sleek, unassuming pieces of futuristic follicle management technology that whip off your five o'clock shadow (or more) with the minimum of fuss. Some of them even clean themselves... Here's five of the best.



ES-LT6N by Panasonic

Aside from the Japanese nanotech blades and pivoting head, Panasonic's ES-LT6N has sensor technology that judges the density of your beard and adjusts motor speed accordingly. Nifty. £330, panasonic.com





Best for toughness MB4850 by Remington

Ideal for the man who travels a lot and makes a point of fitting everything into his carry-on, the MB4850 motor is wrapped in high-impact polycarbonate to withstand the most robust treatment. £60, remington-europe.com

Photograph by Agata Pec 77

Space invader

The new BMW 7 Series features laser lights, 3D sensors — and it'll even park itself

From the outside, this latest version of BMW's flagship, boat-like 7 Series is characteristically sleek, but beneath the hood is some of the cleverest technology in the industry right now. Here's the inside track on a few of the innovations heading your way:

It's lighter than it looks

The car's skeleton is made from a combination of lightweight carbon-fibre-reinforced plastic, aluminium and steel, originating from BMW's electric i3 and i8 designs. This has helped to shed 130kg in weight despite the car being taller and longer than its predecessor, improving fuel economy and handling.

It features a hybrid powerhouse

At launch comes one diesel (730d) and one petrol (740i) engine, with a plug-in hybrid model to follow in 2016. The 740e is powered by a turbocharged, 2.0-litre, four-cylinder engine twinned with a compact electric motor which on its own is capable of powering the big 7 up to 75mph.

It knows how you move

BMW is debuting gesture control technology which uses 3D sensors to register hand movements. So, swiping and pointing could trigger answering and rejecting phone calls, while waggling your finger in a circular motion adjusts the stereo volume. Gestures directed at other road users are, so far, not supported.

Is has an active grille

The 7 is the first in the family to feature the latest active grille technology. Those visible air vents with chrome slats are not just for style, they regulate airflow by opening if the engine needs some extra cooling, and when closed they improve the car's aerodynamics.

Its lights are superpowered

Optional blue laser lights offer incredible visibility in anti-dazzle high-beam mode by illuminating the road some 600m ahead, twice as far as conventional headlights.



PERPETUAL MOTION

To celebrate the opening of William & Son's new Mayfair flagship, we asked third-generation Swiss watchmaker Laurent Ferrier to create this truly special timepiece: a limited edition watch of unparalleled craftsmanship with a unique movement developed in Ferrier's workshops. Satisfy all your horological aspirations at our Bruton Street store: two floors of beautiful, hand-picked essentials and diversions for town and country living.



WILLIAM & SON

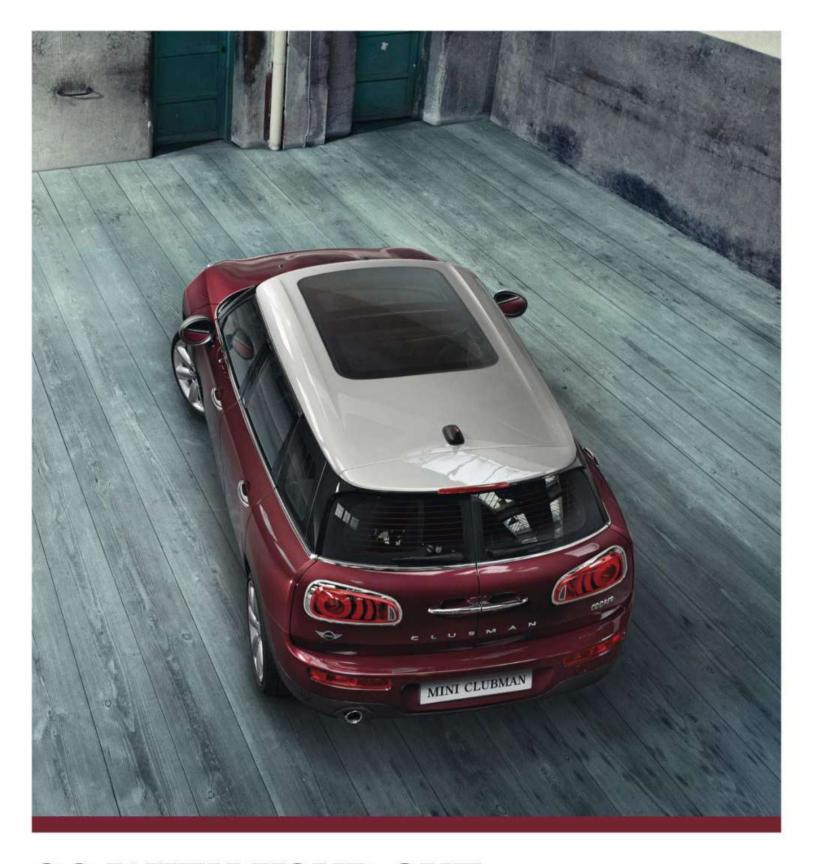
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Behind the seams

Eight menswear designers reveal their own weekday outfits





Christopher Bastin

Creative director, Gant

"I love wearing what we design, so mostly Gant and Gant Rugger. But when I'm unfaithful, I go for Saint Laurent white sneakers, shirts from new Swedish brand Appletree, and the occasional tie from Drake's."

Light wine knitted silk tie, £105, by Drake's *drakes.com*





Alessandro Sartori

Artistic director, Berluti

"I like to wear a three-piece Berluti suit on weekdays and a black long-sleeved crewneck, brown leather Berluti blazer and skinny jeans from Acne at weekends. I love to wear a Monaco watch, too."

Monaco Calibre on blue alligator leather strap, £4,050, by Tag Heuer *tagheuer.co.uk*



Kim Jones Men's style director, Louis Vuitton

"I love a pair of classic Levi's 501s from 1933."

1933 501 vintage jeans, £215, by Levi's *levi.com*



Mehmet Ali Design director, Hardy Amies

"On a casual day I'll wear APC jeans, but when I'm on show, a bespoke Hardy Amies suit, cut by Will Adams. You can rely on a Northampton-made shoe — I'm now wearing the A/W '15 loafer we made with Trickers."

Burgundy leather loafers, £495, by Hardy Amies x Trickers hardyamies.com





Illustrations by Mark Oliver



John Ray Creative director, Alfred Dunhill

"I see outfits as uniforms: something I feel comfortable wearing yet confident in. Now I wear bespoke Dunhill suits and shirts, Dunhill braces, Northampton shoes and EB Meyrowitz glasses."

Corbusier caramel buffalo horn frames, £2,000, by EB Meyrowitz meyrowitz.com









Thomas Harvey

Head of menswear, Aquascutum

"I tend to build my outfits around my Imogene + Willie jeans, and I'm currently wearing a lot of James Perse crew necks. I've also just started investing in made-to-measure shoes from Church's. For the price, they are the best shoes on the market."

Grafton brown leather brogues, £445, by Church's church-footwear.com



Gordon Richardson

Design director, Topman

"My style principles have always remained the same, but reflective of the moment. My day-to-day wardrobe consists of crew-neck knits – preferably in the finest-gauge cashmere available – and smart, well-cut, slightly cropped trousers.

I'm no longer a jeans man."

Grey textured cropped chinos, £35, by Topman topman.com



Charlie Casely-Hayford

Founder, Casely-Hayford

"A made-to-measure Casely-Hayford suit with cropped trousers, Sunspel T-shirt, Drake's pocket square, Cubitts glasses, red football socks and 12-hole army surplus boots. My clothes are a statement of ease — I like not having to think what I'm going to wear every morning."

White cotton T-shirt, £55, by Sunspel sunspel.com





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24) ·

Exclusively at







Esquire recommends 55in LG Ultra HD 4K TV 55UF950V

Sharp performance with "My channels" tile for bookmarking lavourites. £1,570; lg.com

→ Now in everything from cameras to tablets and laptops, 4K is hailed as a "game changer" by the tech industry. Of course it is: the tech industry is always trying to sell you new versions of old things. But if there's one area where the techy sell is being met by customer uptake, it's in TVs. Sales of 4K sets now account for over half of all the televisions sold by John Lewis, and figures should treble next year, while BT and Netflix has embraced super hi-definition.

Also commonly referred to as UHD, 4K gives four times the detail of standard HD. The picture is more defined and the colours more vivid, with the blackest of blacks so even the background stands out. The higher number of pixels means you can watch a much larger screen from the same seating position as your previous TV, without the image pixellating.

"Go as big as you dare," says John Kempner, vision buyer for John Lewis. "The ideal viewing distance for 4K technology is loosely calculated as about 1.5 times the TV inch size, measured diagonally."

The best way to choose which set is right for you is the most obvious: go to a store and spend time looking at a few. You might also want to check you have decent broadband at home (minimum 15Mps) and investing in a soundbar is also a good idea (thinner TVs inevitably mean compromised speakers). If you're worried that the technology companies will be trying to sell you something else in 12 months time, Kempner believes you can rest assured. "4K is the new benchmark for picture resolution. It's hard to imagine that it will be bettered anytime soon," he says.

65in Sony Bravia X90c

Esquire recommends

The world's thinnest TV – 4.9mm at one point – is virtually bezel-free and has no screws. Its Android TV interface means a smartphone-style experience. £3,250; johnlewis.com



Head guard

Lighter than any other headgear, Canterbury's Airflow is built to offer maximum protection to the temple regions. Worth looking silly? You saw the hammering George North's bonce took in the last Six Nations... £50. lovell-rugbv.co.uk



Boots

Asics Gel Lethal Hybrid 4 rugby boots, a professional choice, specifically designed to reduce risk of ankle injuries while the kangaroo leather upper boot fits like a glove. £100. prodirectruaby.com



Jersey

Show your colours ahead of the Rugby World Cup and get the latest international iersevs. lovell-rugby.co.uk



How to be a ruck star

With World Cup fever coming to the UK, it's time to tackle the rugby players' regime

→ Like that urge you get to dust off the racket every year (usually around Wimbledon time), there's a fair chance you'll fancy kicking an egg-shaped ball around the park when the Rugby World Cup kicks off this month. To freshen up your rugby kit, here is some of the best

pro-quality gear. But before you go diving into the nearest rolling maul, read the tips on getting into shape from Esquire's PT Harry Jameson. He's picked four power-boosting exercises so you can break through the line like a World Cup finalist. Tweet Harry at @harryjamesonpt



Base laver

The thought of wearing anything vaguely tight is probably too much to bear for the rugby purist, but these carbonyte base lavers by Skins are cutting-edge with carbon threads to reduce friction for fantastic comfort and great on-pitch performance. Top, £70; shorts, £40, skins.net



The Copolymer "Air-loc" bladder by Gilbert (official ball suppliers to the Rugby World Cup 2015 tournament) is wrapped in a hand-stitched rubber compound outer - and it's even been pre-kicked. £100, gilbertrugby.com



Kiwi kit stalwarts Canterbury make a vast range of shorts for training and matches. This pro quality style comes in rugged polvester-twill in all black. What are they hinting at? £17, canterbury.com



Single arm squat push press

This works the quads, glutes, core shoulders and arms. With your arm bent, hold a dumbbell up to your shoulder. Squat down, then push the weight above your head before lowering. Do 4-5 sets of 8-12 reps on each arm, 60secs between reps.

Interval treadmill push

Stand on a turned off treadmill. In a low position, grip the handles and start to move your feet to get the track going, as if you are pushing a car. Run for 25secs and then jump your feet to the side of the treadmill and allow the tracks to stop. Rest for 25secs and repeat 5-10 times.

Plyometric box jumps

If you don't have a plyo box, a step or weights bench will do. Stand in front facing the box and explode upward, landing softly with both feet on top. Either step back down, or iump, trying to land equally as softly. A set is 10-15 reps, aim for 4-5 sets with 1min rest between each.

Clap press-ups

This helps fend off opponents with force. In a press-up position brace your abs. Lower yourself then push up as hard as you can and clap your hands together in front of your chest, land softly and repeat 10-20 times. Rest for 1-2mins, repeat 4-5 times.





Tick-choc, tick-choc

Rado's retro timepiece is a sweet sensation

→ The Seventies are back. Wide-legged trousers are everywhere; prawn cocktails and fondues are firmly back on menus, and a tertiary palette of avocado, mustard and terracotta is ruling the runways once again.

The watch industry is getting in on the act, too. At April's Baselworld watch fair, Patek Philippe unveiled a distinctly Seventies take on its classic Nautilus sports watch. With its brown dial and rose gold case, the re-imagining of the classic shape, originally released in 1976, felt both modern and retro all at once.

Rado's new chocolate brown
HyperChrome is an equally welcome
take on the trend. Featuring a hightech, matt brown ceramic case,
a polished brown ceramic bezel and
rose gold-coloured stainless steel
inserts, the watch is a playful,
contemporary take on Rado's
landmark timepiece. What's more,
thanks to the extremely hard-wearing
ceramic fabrication, it will withstand
your most energetic disco hustle.

ESQUIRE APPROVES

Brown
HyperChrome Automati
Chronograph, £3,650
rado.com



→ Bond is back in a few weeks (see page 164). Spectre opens here on 26 October and once again we'll be joyfully immersed in a world populated with sharply dressed spies, conniving baddies, well-armed beauties and menacing pussy cats. For some reason, spies and style have often gone hand in hand. Way back in the Sixties, there was a glut of dandified assassins: as well as James Bond, there was a bowler-hatted John Steed in The Avengers (played by Patrick Macnee, who died last June); Michael Caine as Harry Palmer in The Ipcress File; Roger Moore's Simon Templar in The Saint; and The Man From Uncle with Robert Vaughn and David McCallum (black polo necks ahoy). Last year, there was Matthew Vaughn's Kingsman with Colin Firth playing a snappy-suited spy whose secret service HQ was in a Savile Row tailor's (and whose clothes are available from mrporter.com), and this summer marked Guy Ritchie's remake of The Man From Uncle with Henry Cavill and Armie Hammer.

For now, though, it's all about Daniel Craig once again looking pristine in his bespoke Tom Ford tailoring. Happily for us, we will all be able to get our own slice of the action. Although the Bond beauties may not be readily available, Q's gadget-infused arsenal is not to be recommended, and we probably wouldn't want Blofeld's long-haired Persian moulting all over our suiting, much of the traditional spy's British-inspired wardrobe is coincidentally in fashion this autumn:

The pinstripe suit. This espionage essential - Daniel Craig wears a particularly fetching Tom Ford pinstripe suit in Spectre - was taken up by many of the designers for winter. Everyone from Givenchy and Saint Laurent to Ami and Bruno Cucinelli showed their take

THE STYLE COLUMN

Jeremy Langmead

The secret's out: espionage

apparel is bang on-trend

- on this classic. To bring it up-to-date, and lose the Eighties feel, the cut was slim and the jacket shorter.
- 2 Pinstripe's elder bother, herringbone, has also been a spy favourite for decades - particularly when said spy has been invited to partake in country pursuits by an eager-to-impress evil entrepreneur. It was used handsomely for both suiting and overcoats by designers such as Valentino. Etro. Marni and Tom Ford.
- The sharp coat is another popular item in the gentleman spy's wardrobe: Steed was rarely seen without one; and Bond wears a neat-fitting navy Crombie-style coat in Spectre. A new coat is something every man should invest in each autumn and there are plenty of covetable versions: Calvin Klein Collection and Maison Margiela have some desirable double-breasted designs, and Givenchy and Officine Generale some neatlooking single-breasted ones. If you want to blow your cover, this is the time to do it: the "statement coat" (ie, "Bloody hell, that's brave, mate") was popular on many of the catwalks - especially the big, bold, checked ones by Casely-Hayford, JW Anderson and Raf Simons.

- Even the colours most designers chose to dwell on for their autumn collections were undercover friendly. After a few seasons of bright colours for winter and summer, black and grey were definitely back in fashion. Black needs no introduction, but the way to wear grey this autumn is to mix different shades of it at the same time: as exemplified by designers such as Bottega Veneta, Acne and Public School
- Chelsea boots. This menswear stalwart, popular in the Swinging Sixties, is the perfect shoe for the spy who needs to look smart and run fast. And it looks good teamed with your slim-fitting Sixtiesinspired tailoring. There are some great versions available at the moment: Alfred Dunhill and Tom Ford have some particularly smart designs, but check out. too, those by Guidi and Common Projects.

There are a couple of other big trends for this winter that I should point out, as is traditional in an October issue, but they don't really tick the spy style box. Well, they do, but the only spy who really embraced them wholeheartedly is Austin Powers. If I had included The Spy Who Shagged Me in the list of films at the start of this column I fear it might have undermined my argument.

However, both shearling and velvet have made a comeback as part of the Seventies trend that is infiltrating the menswear world at the moment. And, despite the Austin Powers association, they look rather good. Richard James, Burberry Prorsum, Oliver Spencer and Haider Ackermann all presented a modern-looking velvet for suiting and jackets, while Coach, Belstaff, JW Anderson and Tom Ford presented shearling 2.0. Check them out: they look quite dapper. If this is too much, stick with items one to five - more appropriate if you'd prefer to make a Spectre rather than a spectacle of yourself. 2





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Marc Newson drafts a smart pen for generation digital



It's been a momentous year for industrial designer Marc Newson. Within months of joining Apple and then just weeks after entering the record books when his Lockheed Lounge Chair fetched £2.4m at auction — the most ever paid for an object created by a living designer — he was named as the first person to conceive a pen for Montblanc who was not "in-house". Newson attended the unveiling in Milan of a new pen for a generation more accustomed to texting.

Make no mistake about the Montblanc M. Whether the initial stands for the brand, for "Marc" or for "millennials", it is a 21st-century design with sleek looks and clever features, including a function as a writer for screen or tablet. However, says Newson, "This object is not about me. It's about Montblanc. It's very much about trying to create an object which speaks not only to Montblanc customers, but to customers who don't already have a Montblanc pen."

Offered as a youthful alternative to the iconic (in this case, the word is truly merited)
Meisterstück, the M features the first-ever use of two Montblanc stars — on cap and barrel — and a magnetic connection cap/barrel system that always rights itself. Its form is unmistakably Montblanc without looking like a baby version of the Meisterstück.

The Montblanc M will be available this autumn as a rollerball, ballpoint, fountain pen, art liner and screen/tablet writer, priced between £300 and £400. **Ken Kessler** *montblanc.com*





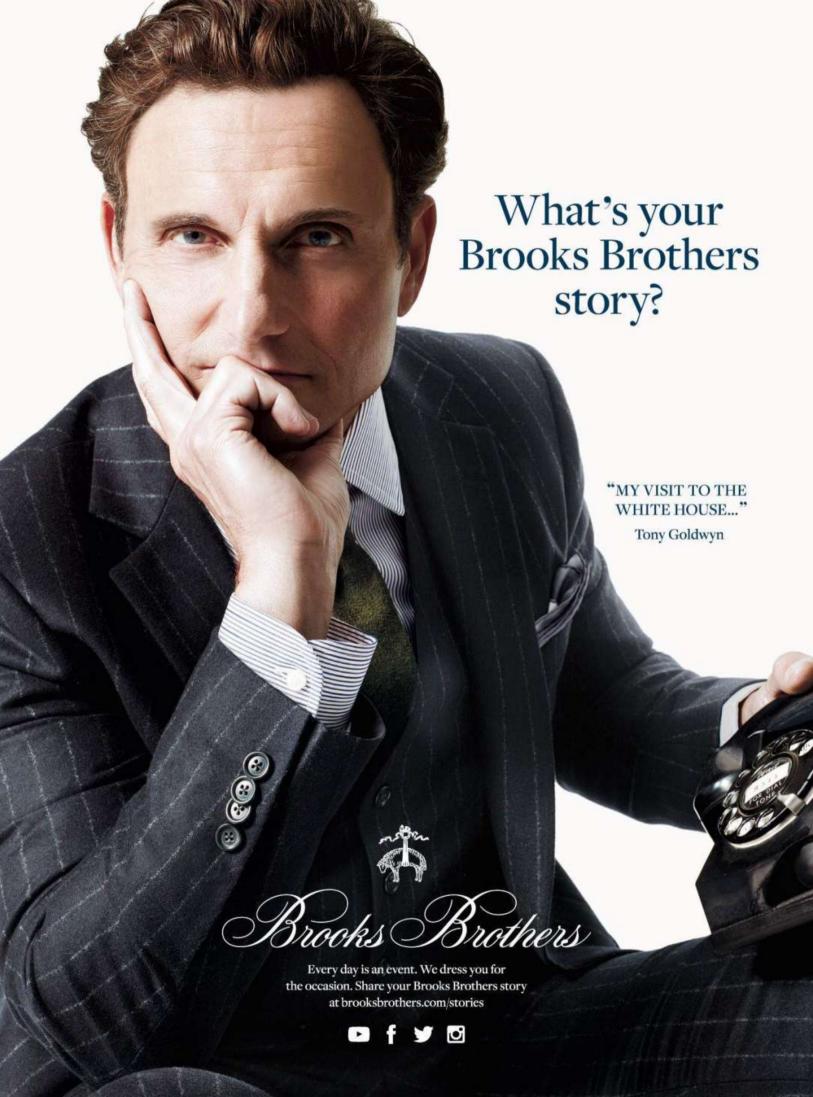
02 Ben Sherman X Pendleton Woolen Mills

British workwear with an American twist

Over the coming weeks, you'll see more and more shackets, sturdy boots will stomp the pavements, and the streets will be *bleu* with all those French painter's coats. Needless to say, workwear is in, so Ben Sherman's collaboration with Pendleton couldn't be more timely. The British label's signature button-down has been recreated in two fabrics – green/gold plaid and Black Watch tartan – from the US wool mill's extensive archive. Although the 100 per cent virgin wool is woven in Washington State, the shirts feature decidedly Sherman-esque elements such the locker loop, rear collar button and box pleat, making this a truly transatlantic project.



One of the most steadfast shoe brands, Grenson is forever exploring new shapes, materials and styles, but it always stays true to an ethos of outstanding quality and craftsmanship. True to form, its A/W '15 collection has abundant new designs, but our pick of them has to be the Grover, a chunky boot in Italian grain leather. Known as the Chasse in France, and the Y-Tip in Japan, a seam runs up the centre of the toe from the chunky commando sole to the small "apron", nestled neatly beneath the eyelets. It's a proper hard-wearing vintage-style work boot, and we love it. For those with daintier tastes, a low-top version, the Percy, is also available.















www.thebritishbeltcompany.co.uk







THE LIST

Christopher Raeburn

The Victorinox artistic director shares his love for pale ale, Papillon and his customised Condor Pista

1/Sustenance

Beer IPAs. I love the fact these are growing [in popularity] and there are so many breweries doing their own. Spirit Dark rum and ginger ale. Dish Sole. I really like white fish. Snack Fruit. Is that odd? I love apples. Restaurant The Crosby Hotel, New York - the food is excellent.



2 / Tools

App Instagram. And the brilliant Nike Running app.

Website nationalgeographic.com, an ongoing obsession.

Instagram account My good friend Jolyon Bexon, he's general manager at Gieves & Hawkes (@jolyonevattbexon). Bike Condor Pista - bespoke for my

Tool Swiss Army Knife.

Gadget Bang & Olufsen Beoplay A2. Pen Kaweco.

Camera Canon G-10.

lanky legs.

Watch Victorinox INOX.

3 / Style

Shoes Diego Vanassibara.

Jeans Only Rapha.

Suit Gieves & Hawkes allowed me to use silk maps from the Fifties in a made-to-measure dinner suit.

Tie I still wear my Air Cadets one, I love it.

Scarf Christopher Raeburn, screen-printed merino wool. Hat My battered old baseball cap.



4 / Travel

Shop Kiosk, Greenwich Village, New York.

Hometown Hever, Kent.

Suitcase I collaborate with Porter;

its bags are incredible.

Hotel The Nolitan, New York. It's right by the Williamsburg Bridge, so you can

Destination Tokyo's my favourite.



Fragrance Wonderwood by Comme des Garçons.



Film Papillon (1973).

Book What I Talk About When I Talk About Running by Haruki Murakami. Song "Before Your Very Eyes" by Atoms For Peace.





good restaurants in the city refuse

to open on Sundays and Mondays

because the fish market is closed.)

part of your itinerary. October is

No matter what time of the year

you visit, a market trip is an essential

particularly lovely in Venice. The fruit

and vegetable market positively glows

orange at this time of year with a good

range of pumpkins and squashes, and

even in the UK we are seeing more and

more interesting new varieties. Here is a startlingly simple recipe (below) that

makes the most of a small number of

the sum of its individual parts. Ask the

delicatessen to slice your prosciutto

able to almost see through it. 3

as thinly as possible — you want to be

ingredients to great effect. It's one

of those dishes that's greater than

→ Good restaurants are born of passion. It might come from a desire to serve the very best food in the neighbourhood, or it could stem from an expertise and love for fine wines. Maybe it's a deeply held instinct for generosity and hospitality that sets the restaurant apart from its competitors. For me, and for my first restaurant Polpo, it was my obsession with a city — Venice.

If you've been there, you will be fully aware of its ability to seduce and stupefy. It is common to hear of visitors suffering from Stendhal Syndrome — a condition that renders victims queasy, faint and speechless — as they struggle to absorb and process Venice's overwhelming beauty. Been there. Done that. But what still draws me to La Serenissima, now I've hardened myself to its aesthetic charms and strengthened my immune system to its hypnotic lure, is the surprisingly vibrant and youthful food scene.

First, however, a word of warning. It is very easy, as an unsuspecting tourist, to get duped into thinking a packed, well-lit restaurant overlooking the Rialto Bridge where the waiters are all dressed like gondoliers is a safe bet. Wrong. With few exceptions, restaurants with a view are tourist traps with mediocre food that's about as authentic as the plastic trinkets sold in St Mark's Square. Restaurants with large displays showing photographs of all the food? Run away! Remember, very long menus listing every Italian classic and 30 different pizzas are a dead giveaway, too. There is a direct inverse relationship between the length of a menu and the quality of the food.

The culinary heart of Venice is to be found in the bàcari that nestle in the unfashionable backstreets. These tiny wine bars serve small snacks and dainty tumblers of young local wines, but the quality of ingredients is high and the recipes and traditions are passionately authentic. The locals eat



"Like all the world's good restaurants, these places are driven by passion"

here and it is where you should eat. too: my favourite is All'Arco. For a sit-down meal of exceptional quality, freshness and simplicity, you can do no better than Alle Testiere (osterialletestiere.it). As a rule, any Venetian restaurant that belongs to L'Associazione dei Ristoranti della Buona Accoglienza (veneziaristoranti. it) has committed to cooking real food in the genuine traditions of the region.

But, like all good restaurants anywhere in the world, these places are driven by passion. Add to that a fastidious connection to the seasons and a slavish daily pilgrimage to the morning market at Rialto, and you have a real recipe for success. (Many



Roasted pumpkin with prosciutto and Parmesan

Ingredients

- 2 medium butternut squash (or acorn squash)
- 1 heirloom pumpkin (chioggia and iron bark are also good varieties)
- 12 very thin slices prosciutto
- 200g grated Parmesan
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Handful torn sage leaves
- Handful pumpkin seeds
- Flaky sea salt
- Ground black pepper

1 Preheat the oven to 200°C. Cut the squash and pumpkin in half and remove the seeds and the hard stalk. If the skins are thick, remove these, too, with a peeler or a very sharp knife. Cut the remaining pumpkin and squash into bite-sized pieces and toss them in a roasting tray with a good pinch of salt, a few twists of pepper, the sage leaves and a good glug or two of olive oil.

2 Once all the pieces are well coated, place into the oven for 20-30mins until cooked through. To test, push a skewer into the flesh; if it's done there should be little or no resistance.

3 Remove from the oven and while still warm, divide equally among six warmed plates. Loosely drape over the prosciutto, distribute the Parmesan and pour a good drizzle of olive oil over the top. Scatter over the pumpkin seeds and serve



Opposite:

Norman's

pumpkin and

prosciutto main



River Island reinvents itself with high-quality materials and timeless silhouettes

→ River Island's autumn/winter 2015 collection heralds a renaissance for the brand, offering premium materials, considered tailoring and on-trend retro designs. Expect workwear-inspired shackets, sports-lux pieces, corduroy trousers, single and double-breasted suits and plenty of chunky knitwear, but the range is strongest with its textured coats and shearling-collared bombers.



The master of the understatement, Bob Dylan's striped T-shirt and deconstructed blazer pairing is timeless and pleasingly lo-fi



Navy/yellow striped cotton top, £20





White leather



Navy pinstriped canvas



Alain Delon is autumn-ready with his shearling jacket and crew neck combo. Team yours with jeans and a pair of white trainers, left, to complete the look



Gregory Peck gets it right by teaming white sneakers with slightly baggy khaki chinos. Throw on a crew-neck waffle-patterned jumper in navy and you're away







THE NEW ABARTH 595 COMPETIZIONE. NOTHING EXCITING HAPPENS IN SILENCE.



DISCOVER THE UNMISTAKEABLE SOUND OF THE ABARTH 595 COMPETIZIONE WITH NEW 180HP ENGINE AND RECORD MONZA EXHAUST. FIND OUT MORE AT ABARTHCARS.CO.UK

Official fuel consumption figures for Abarth range mpg (l/100km): Combined 45.6 (6.2) – 48.7 (5.8), Urban 34.4 (8.2) – 37.2 (7.6), Extra urban 55.4 (5.1) – 60.1 (4.7), CO2 Emissions: 145 – 134 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO2 figures are obtained for comparative purposes in accordance with EC directives/regulations and may not be representative of real-life driving conditions. Factors such as driving style, weather and road conditions may also have a significant effect on fuel consumption. Abarth UK is a trading style of Fiat Chrysler Automobiles UK Ltd.

The New Abarth 595 Competizione range starts from £19,890 OTR. Model shown is an Abarth 595 Competizione 1.4 T-Jet 180 hp at £22,110 OTR with Cordolo Red Tri-Coat Metallic Paint at £660, 17" Formula – Matt Black Finish Alloy Whees at £190, Black Stripe and Door Mirrors at £170 & Abarth Corsa Front Seats by Sabelt in Leather/Alcantara at £1200.

JONES BOOTMAKER







→ These days, we all know that it pays to be green. Whether you're running vour own wind farm empire or simply remembering to take the recycling out once a week, most of us probably do something to help the planet. Some people, though, have gone that extra vard. Green mayericks like Topher White, the conservationist using old mobile phones to save rainforests, or Kamal Meattle, who believes that office workers should grow their own fresh air, for example. Organisations are at the forefront of maverick green thinking, too. Take BMW and their i3; if their goal was to build an emissionfree car for the 21st century, then they've succeeded. But it goes further than that. This is a car that employs green thinking from top to bottom. The seat covers combine responsibly sourced wool and leather tanned with an olive leaf-based agent. The symmetrical curving dash is inlaid with treated eucalyptus wood, sourced from sustainably managed European forests. Then there's the driving stats - up to 100 miles of pure electric driving, with zero CO2 emissions and from just £2 to fully recharge. The best bit? You still get to drive a BMW.

Three green mavericks



KAMAL MEATTLE The Indian activist and CEO of the Paharpur Business Centre and Software Technology

Incubator Park based in New Delhi, India, has a unique tactic for cleaning the polluted air: 800 plants spread

Above: green pioneer Kamal Meattle takes things back to basics by harnessing plants to purify the air in his New Delhi office building

throughout his company's lower six floors, greening each room and hallway. Their job? To remove soot and other pollutants. In 2014, the visionary gave a Ted Talk: "How to Grow your own Fresh Air".



MIKE BIDDLE

Less than 10 per cent of plastic rubbish is recycled, compared to nearly 90 per cent of

metals. Laziness? Not necessarily. The problem lies in the sorting of the dozens of different kinds of plastic that are manufactured all over the world. Plastics remain "the last frontier of recycling", says Mike Biddle, founder and CEO of plastics recycling company MBA Polymers. So, it's developed cheap and superenergy-efficient systems that are capable of doing the previously impossible: sorting all that rubbish.



TOPHER WHITE

The conservation technologist is the brains behind Rainforest Connection,

a start-up that converts recycled mobile phones into solar-powered listening devices to monitor the rainforest for the sound of chainsaws

> and suspicious motors, before sending alerts to regional rangers. Rainforest Connection has successfully stopped poaching and logging in Sumatra. For their next task? Protecting more remote reserves in Indonesia, the Amazon and Africa.

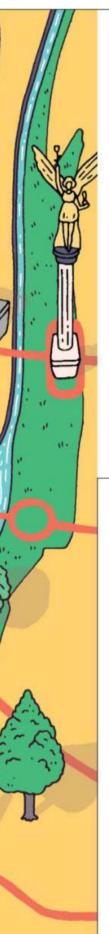
"The best bit? You still get to drive a BMW"













THE BARBER DOSSIER Munich

Bavaria's capital excels at life's simple delights

Munich is a cultured place. There are theatres, opera houses and galleries galore, but don't let that put you off — the city's true genius is an ability to elevate more modest pleasures to the status of high art. Witness the class of the football team, Bayern Munich, the chic sophistication of car maker BMW and, above all, the craft of Bavarian beer-making, which reaches its zenith in the Oktoberfest when nearly 6.5m litres of Pilsner are consumed in just over two weeks with barely a brawl, at least not involving the locals. Prost! Tom Barber is a founder of originaltravel.co.uk

Drink

As discussed, Bavarians go bonkers for beer (factoid: the state is home to 700 breweries) and the best place to drink the golden stuff is, appropriately enough, in a beer garden. The Viktualienmarkt, a food market and square, can get touristy but the beer garden is a classic example of Germanic egalitarianism: the Pilsner is served from vast wooden barrels supplied by Munich's big six breweries on rotation every six weeks. Try to time your run to coincide with Augustiner, the best in show. viktualienmarkt.de

Stay

At the Cortiina Hotel, which is perfectly located within walking distance of the best bits of the city. Understated and extremely classy, the hotel is the flagship property of the Kull & Weinzierl partnership responsible for many of Munich's hippest bars and restaurants. Watch the sunset from the rooftop bar or enjoy one of nearly 30 gin brands in the Cortiina Bar. Opposite the hotel and owned by the same group, Bar Centrale will serve you a mean espresso to kick-start your day. cortiina.com



Lunch

At Brenner Grill, a lovely restaurant with vaulted ceilings in a discreet courtyard off Maximilianstrasse. Chefs knock out fresh lobster or delicious Swiss Simmental Goldbeef steaks on a large open grill, accompanied by fine German and Italian wines and some of the more attractive diners you'll ever sit near. Eat on the terrace if the weather's good. brennergrill.de

Dine ↓

At Nürnberger Bratwurst Glöckl, in a 400-year-old building beside the Frauenkirche, famed for its Nürnberger Schweinswürstl mit Kraut (that's pork sausage and cabbage). This slice of pure Bavaria has been rammed pretty much permanently since it opened in 1893. bratwurst-gloeckl.de

Avoid

tit of yourself at the Oktoberfest/Wiesn. The event is over 200 years old and despite the revelry. it is revered by Bavarians, So, don't come in a silly costume (unless that silly costume is your new lederhosen) and do soak up the pretty strong lager with regular requests for pretzels, roast chicken and Schwein every which way from the dirndl-wearing waitresses. oktoberfest.eu

A city with such deep pockets was Drool over some of the bestalways going to have a nightclub looking cars ever made -including this 2002 TI built in 1968 - at the to match, so enter stage left P1. BMW Museum. The building's the party playground for Munich's millionaires and attendant extraordinary architecture is übermodels. Face control on the reason enough to visit, but then door is predictably strict, but you vou can also immerse vourself in the century-long evolution of one read Esquire, so once you're in you can enjoy a chic interior. of the world's most famous car great dance DJs and wall-to-wall Teutonic totty. p1-club.de bmw-welt.com

Party

Shop

Head to Angermaier to buy vourself some lederhosen They will prove to be the most comfortable item of clothing you ever own, you never need to wash them (result) and wearing them at the Oktoberfest means you won't stand out as a tourist quite as much. trachten-angermaier.de

(and motorcycle) margues.

See

Do 1

The Englischer Garten is a huge park in the centre that's home to more beer gardens, but we're here to see the surfers. The man-made Eisbach river running through it has had a neat standing wave since engineers in the Seventies tried to slow the flow with concrete blocks. As these blocks are a couple of feet below the surface, this is very much a "see" and not a "do" unless you're a pro surfer.

Why now?

Because the Oktoberfest, cunningly, begins at the end of September and reaches its finale during the first couple of days of October. This time of year is usually still sunny, so if you miss the festivities you can enjoy Munich minus the drunk tourists.

When in...

Refer to the Oktoberfest as Wiesn, which means "meadow", because the mutter of all bierfesten takes place in Theresienwiese, a huge square to the west of the centre.

Get there

British Airways, EasyJet and Lufthansa fly to Munich daily.



Game changers

Forget Candy Crush: the 25 best phone games you should be playing



01 The Executive

Battle werewolves and protect your

trillion-dollar mining company by acrobatic stunts/kung-fu over 120 levels. *iOS*; £3.99



02 Leo's Fortune

Beautiful platform game that pits moustachioed

bug Leo against various physicsbased puzzles, with long-lasting addictive gameplay. *iOS*; £3.99



03 Frozen Synapse Prime

Turn-based tactical shooter across 40+ missions leading rebels to overthrow an evil corporation. The best Android strategy game. *Android*; £2.99



04 Ridiculous Fishing

Tilt, tap and swipe to catch fish using guns, chainsaws and toasters in this homage to 8-bit-style arcade games.iOS/Android; £2.29/£1.99



05 Need For Speed: Most Wanted

Braking-is-cheating street-racing game with revved-up graphics and 40+ customisable cars. Three years' old now, but satisfyingly updated. iOS; £0.79



<mark>06</mark> 80 Days

Bafta-nominated steampunk game

reimagining Phileas Fogg's journey around the world. Travel by airship, steam-train or mechanical camel. iOS; £3.99



07 Hitman GO

The long-running strategy game franchise ined as a board game.

reimagined as a board game. Fantastic stylised graphics. IOS: £3.99



08 Badland

Action/adventure puzzler with endless

awards. Guide your forest dweller through a scary fairy-tale land. iOS/Android; Free + IAP



classic

09 Modern Combat 5: Blackout

Certificate-16 "strong violence" shooter and successful transfer of the evergreen console

Android; Free + IAP



10 The Wolf Among Us

Fairy-tale characters are murdered in this hard-boiled, uber-violent thriller based on the Fables comics. Can you solve the crime? Android; Free + IAP



11 Radiant Defense

Strategy shooter that involves preventing

hordes of aliens from infiltrating your tower. Addictive.

Android: Free + IAP





Goat Simulator

Cause as much

destruction as you

can, as a goat.

Genius

iOS; £0.79

Monument Valley

Apple's Game
Of The Year 2014 is
a beautiful, surreal
platform game
inspired by geometry
and minimalist
3D design.
iOS; £2.99



14 Geometry Wars 3: Dimensions Evolved

Award-winning arcade shooter series. Battle waves of enemies across 3D grids with consolequality graphics. *IOS:* £3.99



15 The Walking Dead: Season Two

Unsettling episodic game with tailored decisionmaking gameplay and artwork inspired by the original comics of the show. iOS/Android; Free + IAP



21 Beach Buggy Blitz

20 Implosion

game set 20 years after the fall of

Earth. Score by Grammy-winning

Lord Of The Rings engineer John

Kurlander. iOS; £7.99

Never Lose Hope

Top-down arcade race

Cartoon buggy racer with "infinite drive" (you can go for miles, never passing the same scenery) plus swamps, caves, giant crabs etc. Android; Free + IAP



16 Dark Nebula HD – Episode Two

A "labyrinth game on steroids". Tilt the screen to avoid traps by guiding your character through 19 levels across six environments. iOS: £2.29



17 The Simpsons: Tapped Out

Homer's caused a meltdown in Springfield. Now it's up to you to rebuild it! Charming, constantly updating city-building game. Android: Free + IAP



18 Crazy Taxi: City Rush

Drive like a maniac through city and beach to deliver your passengers on time. You can also customise your cabs.



19 Transistor

Strategy/fighting game as you wield a "weapon nown origin" through

of unknown origin" through stunning sci-fi backdrops. *iOS:* £7.99



22 Beat Sneak Bandit

Sixties spy graphics meet rhythmically controlled gameplay in this original puzzler. Aim? Steal the world's clocks back from Duke Clockface. iOS; £2.29



23 Football Manager Handheld 2015

Call the tactics from your digital dugout. This version has a new Scouting Agency to monitor the 50 top players. *Android*; £6.99 + IAP



24 Lara Croft: Relic Run

Run, swing and drive your way while collecting relics in this phone version of the parkour console favourite. Epic boss fights included. iOS/Android; Free + IAP



25 AG Drive

Bogglingly fast racer featuring anti-gravity

craft and plenty of difficulty/ background settings. iOS; £2.99







cpcompany.com

CP Company Store - 34 Marshall Street London W1F 7EU cpcompany.co.uk



← Day

Charlie, right, wears: Khaki cotton-mix parka coat, £69; navy textured cotton sweater, £22; stone wash denim jeans, £38; brown leather boots, £55, all by Next

Teo, left, wears:
Navy wool peacoat,
£85; brown ribbed
acrylic mix jumper,
£25; navy flecked
wool mix trousers,
£50; all by Next.
White leather trainers,
£66, by Adidas

All available at next.co.uk





- ↑ "Every man needs a good coat, and the essential wardrobe addition this season is a parka. A slouchy, casual staple, it looks great with jeans, knitwear and chunky boots, but don't be afraid to dress it up over a well-cut suit." Charlie
- ← "Textured knitwear in neutral, Seventies inspired tones is on trend for A/W '15, and worn with a pea coat − one of menswear's all-time greats − you can't really go wrong. Derbies would be good for this look, but simple white leather sneakers make it a bit more contemporary." − Teo



Night →

Teo, right, wears: Navy wool and faux fur collar coat, £120; grey textured wool suit jacket, £100; navy cotton mix roll neck sweater, £22; red tartan wool trousers, £50, all by Next

Charlie, left, wears: Grey cotton puppytooth mac, £85; knitted burgundy polo shirt, £25; navy cotton trousers, £20; brown leather shoes, £50; all by Next

All available at next.co.uk

↑ "A roll-neck is just as smart — often smarter — than a shirt, and layering up like this can look seriously sharp. A statement piece doesn't go amiss either; this faux-fur lapelled overcoat is louche and evening friendly, without being ostentatious." — Teo

→ "Dressing smartly doesn't necessarily mean wearing a suit. Separates in good-quality fabrics such as cashmere and merino can look just as sharp - take this long-sleeve polo, for example. The trick is to keep things slick and simple as these slim chinos and burgundy leather derbies demonstrate." - Charlie







EARNSHAW - 1805 -

LONGCASE 43

SWISS MADE / CHRONOGRAPH DATE / 5 BAR



→ Belgian designer Kris Van Assche has been the artistic director of Dior Homme since 2007. A former protégé of Saint Laurent creative director Hedi Slimane, who Van Assche assisted during his first stint at Yves Saint Laurent (as it was then known), Van Assche's tenure at Dior has been defined by a sporty aesthetic and

Above: at Dior, Kris Van Assche has added a casual twist inspired by the active man a minimal, detail-focused approach.

The Belgian's interpretation of the Dior Homme man is an interesting one. Whereas Slimane set a sylph-like agenda during his time at the brand, with rock star-inspired, super-skinny silhouettes, Van Assche's approach has been subtler. His Dior man has also morphed significantly during his eight

years at the helm, a point Van Assche was eager to emphasise prior to his A/W '15 show earlier this year.

"Dior Homme is about contemporary elegance, which sounds really cheesy. It's about tailoring, for sure, because suiting is at the heart of the collection — but it's also about making sure that this tailoring is very >



"For this new show, I wanted it to be really sartorial and about tailoring and black tie"

contemporary, which is not always the case because this idea of elegance can make it feel a bit old fashioned," he says. "So that's where all the sportswear comes in... I've been at Dior Homme now for eight years. When I started there was almost no sportswear, but now there is so much because the brand is constantly growing."

Van Assche's autumn/winter 2015 collection is one of his strongest, and that's primarily because the designer seems to have struck the perfect balance between this notion of sartorial elegance that defines Dior Homme. and the active man of today.

"For this show I wanted it to be really sartorial and about tailoring and black tie," Van Assche explains. "Black tie immediately makes it old fashioned — Twenties, Thirties, Forties - so I was like, 'We're going to do black tie but it needs to be very contemporary, it needs to feel 2015. It needs a lot of

sportswear.' So, I imagined this guy going to the opera wearing a tuxedo, but he would be going on his bike or on a skateboard or whatever, and then he would go to see something contemporary, not Swan Lake or something," he laughs.

The resulting collection stood out when shown in Paris in January. Tabard-esque bodywarmers with the texture of trainer fabric were worn under suit jackets; pressed flowers were worn as badges on the lapels of Prince of Wales check blazers; while baseball caps came teamed with tuxedos - all clever, intriguing and wearable. Below, Van Assche chooses some of his favourites from the new range.

The best of the collection



Grey wool Prince of Wales check

double-breasted iacket, £2,350

2 The badges

"The badges with the flowers are a must because they come from such a romantic idea of putting a flower on your lapel, but making it very contemporary, very punkish." Black/white lacquer dried flower badges, £340 (per set of three)

3 The parka

"I love the waxed jeans sportswear piece because it really shows the contemporary side of the collection." Black waxed denim sleeveless parka, £1,700



4 The bodywarmer

"I like the knit bodywarmers that look like sneaker mesh, because technically it was very tough to make them. And I like the fact we could give the sportswear vibe in this way. Most of them were in knit and some looked like the technical nylon mesh you have on sneakers. They're wool on the inside and nylon on the outside." Blue/grey checked wool bodywarmer, £1,950

shirt, £550; black wool tuxedo trousers, £590;

black satin bow tie, £90; black leather shoes, £790



The blow-dry is hot again

Mark Ronson has resurrected the high-rise hairdo

→ When Mark Ronson DJ'd at The Monaco Grand Prix Tag Heuer/ McLaren-Honda yacht party this summer, his glamorous companions were Cara Delevingne, and a towering, voluminous, blow-dried quiff. Wearing an electric-blue, double-breasted blazer and T-shirt.

Ronson looked suave but edgy: Riviera chic with altitude. Ronson's look was made by his blow-dry.

The blow-dry is the first statement hairstyle to make a statement in a long time. For more than a decade, men's hair has been channelling austerity and hard-times: think no-nonsense

short back and sides and militarygrade crops. The age of the hardedged haircut, however, is over.

A blow-dry looks edgy and elegant all at once. Consider Richard Gere's demi-volume Eighties dry blowie from American Gigolo. Voluminous sides are key, no longer clippered, but full and sleek. The dry finish is even more critical. Dry hair is the new debonair look.

Those who worry that dry-look volume is fay should consider The Sopranos, or the latter scenes of Casino; there's nothing feminine about those leisure-suited, head-breaking hardnuts. Or Clint Eastwood, who's sported an array of alpha blow-dries, especially in the Dirty Harry films. Currently, actors Patrick Dempsey and Chris Hemsworth are working some sterling blow-dry action.

"The past few years have seen slicked-back pompadours and stylised quiffs, but now the blow-dry is the perfect antidote to the short back and sides, and a bold move [for men's hair]," says Joe Mills, of London barber Joe & Co. "Grow out the fade to a longer length. The blow-dry is about glamour, with some peacock 'look at me' factor. It also embraces taking care of yourself, and not being scared to show it. The bigger the hair, the bigger the statement." Tom Stubbs

kevinmurphy. com.au 2 | Vent brush, £6. by Denman:

Kevin Murphy:

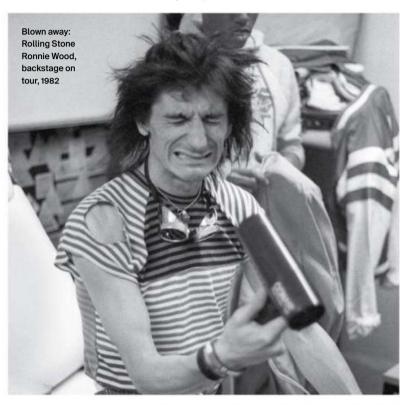
denmanbrush

Products 1 | Body Builder mousse, £18, by

- 3 | This Is A Medium Hair Spray, £17, by Davines: davines.com
- 4 | 3200 hairdryer, £100, by Parlux; parlux. co.uk
- 5 | Clay Definer, £22, by Shu Uemura Art of Hair: shuuemuraartof-







How to blow your top in style

By Joe Mills of Joe & Co, Soho, London



11 For the perfect blow-dry. wash and towel-dry your hair.



2 I Apply a tangerine sized amount of mousse into damp hair. Using a nozzle on your hairdryer on the hottest and strongest setting, angle the air from front to back with the nozzle at a horizontal angle.

3 I Using your brush, pull through from front to back. Do the same with the sides until it is all dry.



Spirit in the Sky

THE NEW **C8** FLYER AUTOMATIC – VINTAGE BLACK EDITION – 44MM

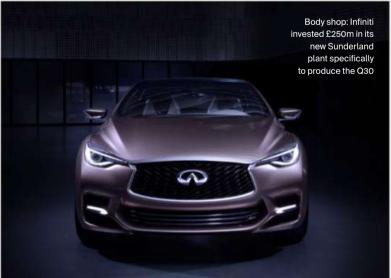
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→ It's a British thing, our insistence on remaining unostentatious. Leave it to other nations to stand up and take a bow whenever credit is considered due. We British will be sitting quietly, coughing gently into our hand, "Well, yes, actually we did do that, and we're sort of, just a bit... proud of it, actually."

The Infiniti Q30 is the latest piece of British engineering to represent exactly the sort of solid design we're talking about and, for once, it's something we're not embarrassed to brag about.

After 26 years in the premium motor vehicle trade, Q30 marks the first of Infiniti's models to be manufactured entirely on British shores, from the very first concept sketches to that final polish as it rolls off Infiniti's new production line in Sunderland.

Focusing on "urban individuality", the category-breaking new compact vehicle comes



two years after the Q30 Concept was unveiled at the 2013 Frankfurt Motor Show.

But what exactly is "urban individuality"? And was it worth the wait?

Judging by its preview at the Goodwood Festival of Speed in June, the Q30's focus on responsive driving, ensuring excellent handling in all conditions, plus the crafted trims and expressive interior design linking the elegantly sleek concept from front to rear bumper — and everything in between — more than answers both questions.

If you're still having doubts, the enhanced driving dynamics, advanced ride performance and extremely enviable design (it's as much a pleasure to look at as it is to drive) should put your mind at rest.

So, what exactly is so special about the Q30 being entirely designed in Britain? Infiniti's

exterior designer, Matt Weaver, explains: "The London design team work in direct competition and collaboration with our other studios in Tokyo, Los Angeles and Beijing. The Q30 is the third design in a row won by the London team, which is pretty special."

And, unlike other manufacturing sites that produce multiple parts of different vehicle models, the Infiniti factory in Sunderland will focus solely on the Q30, ensuring every single part lives up to the standards we've come to expect from the traditional heart of the British motor industry.

And we think that's something definitely worth talking about.

The Infiniti Q30 will be unveiled at the Frankfurt Motor Show on September 15, 2015. Find out more at: infiniti.co.uk



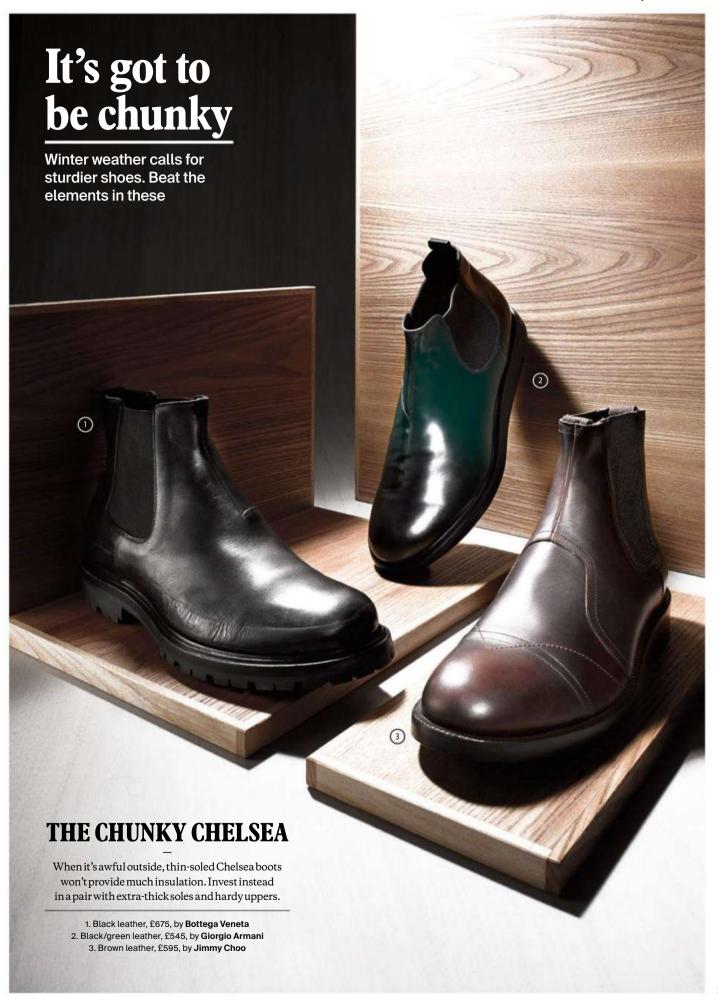
Esquire BIG BLACK BLACK BOOK

THE STYLE MANUAL FOR SUCCESSFUL MEN

A/W 2015

ON SALE 17 SEPTEMBER





Photographs by Luke Kirwan





42833 RASO GOMMATO METAL COVER - REVERSIBLE JACKET
HOODED JACKET IN RASO GOMMATO METAL COVER, MILITARY SPECIFICATION COTTON SATIN
ON ONE SIDE, METALLIC POLYURETHANE COVER ON THE OTHER SIDE FOR A WATER AND WIND
RESISTANT EFFECT. GARMENT DYED THROUGH DOUBLE COLOUR RECIPES WITH THE ADDITION OF
A SPECIAL ANTI-DROP AGENT. REVERSIBLE JACKET. ON THE COTTON SIDE POCKETS WITH DIAGONAL BUTTONED FLAP. SNAP FASTENING AT CUFFS. ON THE METAL LOOKING SIDE DIAGONAL
ZIP FASTENED POCKETS. HOOD WITH VISOR. ZIP AND VELCRO FASTENING.









→ Soho represents all that is exciting and all there is to discover about London. Famed for its lively and eclectic atmosphere, it is also an artistic haven, a treasure trove of winding streets each holding another secret to be discovered. And it is here that Rémy Martin has chosen to settle, once again, for the month of November as it invites connoisseurs of fine cognac to exclusively experience its rich history.

La Maison Rémy Martin is a private members' club created to bring the multitudinous sides of this characterful cognac together with a brave and daring new approach. A townhouse set over four floors, each level will open guests' eyes to yet another facet of this noble and complex drink through creative workshops,

masterclasses, and serves from London's top mixologists. The pinnacle will be the interactive and immersive tasting experience, Opulence Revealed, where Rémy Martin's many worlds will collide.

Established in 1724, it is Rémy Martin's quality that secured it a royal warrant shortly afterwards from King Louis XV, in 1738. Through its dedication to both refinement and innovation, it is continually striving to excite the modern world. So, while you might expect private members' clubs to be housed in more typically grand areas than Soho, you will find this just one way in which La Maison Rémy Martin gives you pause for thought; if you thought you knew cognac, think again.

About the club



Join

Admission to La
Maison is strictly by
invitation only. Apply
to become a member
at rémymartin.com/
en/la-maison-rémy
martin/ explaining
what you could add
to the club.



Drink

Bespoke tasting sessions will present the entire Rémy Martin range including the 1738 Accord Royal, which celebrates that royal seal of approval and will be available in this country for the first time.



Find

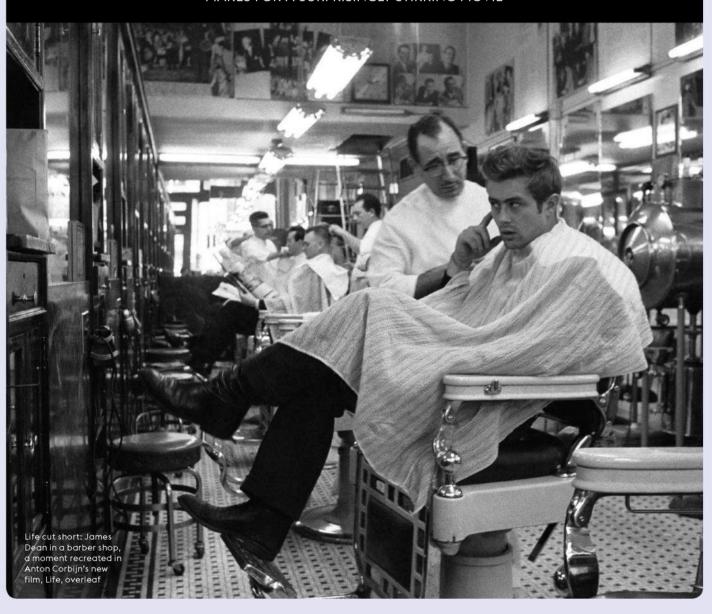
Along with two bars and a luxury lounge, there will be an atelier and a shopping space for guests to peruse at 19 Greek Street, London, W1D 4DT, open from 2-27 November, 2015.

Culture

FILM / MUSIC / BOOKS / TELEVISION / ART

Still life

AN INTIMATE PHOTO SHOOT WITH JAMES DEAN MAKES FOR A SURPRISINGLY STIRRING MOVIE





Dennis Stock: James Dean by Dennis Stock is published on 6 October (Thames & Hudson) to coincide with the release of the new movie Life

→ The relationship between a photographer and a celebrity subject is a curious one. Part collaborative, part parasitic; part intimate, part exploitative. And then there's the question of who's exploiting whom: the photographer hoping to sell glimpses of the star's private life for a quick buck? Or the star inviting the snapper into his confidence to use him in his own quest for glory?

As a rock-photographer-turned-director, Anton Corbijn — Control (2007), A Most Wanted Man (2014) — is in an excellent position to cast light on the nuances of this dynamic in his fourth feature film, Life, which explores the genesis of a series of photographs that Dennis Stock took of James Dean in early 1955 for Life magazine. A book of the photos — which capture Dean bumbling around in sunny LA, rainy New York and at his aunt and uncle's house in rural Indiana — is being published to coincide with the film's release and the 60th anniversary of Dean's death.

It might seem like a slight topic for a drama, though perhaps less so given the obsession with celebrity and privacy in the current age. Corbijn also has two powerful leads working for his cause: Robert Pattinson as Stock, an interesting choice for a young man so painfully familiar with what it feels like to be on the other side of the lens; and model-cum-actor Dane DeHaan as Dean, himself a destined-for-greatness actor who plays Dean as less of a heartthrob, more of a weirdo, and all the more interesting for it.

Of course, the fact that Dean would be killed, aged 24, in a car crash later that same



The fact that Dean would be killed, aged 24, in a car crash later that same year loads everything with a certain poignancy

year, after he'd just filmed Rebel Without a Cause, the role that would make him an icon, loads everything with a certain poignancy. But Corbijn's understated direction and measured pace (a final voiceover is the only misstep), Charlotte Bruus Christensen's sublime

cinematography and Owen Pallett's sophisticated jazz soundtrack make for an incredibly beautiful, elegant piece of film-making that manages to be intriguing and thoughtful on its own quiet terms.

Life is out on 25 September

Dead easy

ALEKSANDAR HEMON'S NEW ZOMBIE NOVEL IS A LIGHT INTRO TO A LITERARY HEAVYWEIGHT



It's possible the Bosnian-American author Aleksandar Hemon is somewhere on your list of "writers I should get round to when I'm feeling brainier". His dazzling, sometimes difficult, fiction has made him twice a finalist for the prestigious National Book Critics Circle Award in the US, and his first nonfiction collection, *The Book of My Lives*, was a highlight of 2013. But it's fair enough that even a writer of Hemon's caliber might want

to let off a little steam now and then. His new book, *The Making of Zombie Wars: A Novel*, is as close as he comes to "light" even if its humour is anything but. Joshua is an aspiring screenwriter and part-time English teacher writing the *Zombie Wars* movie of the title. Snatches from his script-in-progress about an undead apocalypse alternate with accounts of Joshua's daily life battling his war-addled landlord, his closet-dominatrix girlfriend, the

mature Bosnian student he lusts after, her teenage daughter and her addled-but-by-a-different-war husband. Of course there are themes of trauma, the difficulties of human connection and the numbing of contemporary consciousness, but hey, there's also splattered zombie brains. Good times.

The Making of Zombie Wars: A Novel by Aleksandar Hemon is out on IO September



Al Bustan Palace, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Oman. One guest's memory captured in six words. A true story featuring two of our determined Gentlemen who retrieved a camera from the ocean, returning a guest's treasured photos. What story will you tell? ritzcarlton.com/letusstay





Total controller: Jeff
Daniels stars in The
Martian as an Earthbound Nasa executive
bossing a space rescue



Ground work

IN RIDLEY SCOTT'S NEW FILM, JEFF DANIELS ISN'T ON A MISSION TO MARS — AND HE'S JUST FINE WITH THAT

It wouldn't be blockbuster season without a gripping-if-slightly-silly space movie, and filling the slot this year is sci-fi veteran Ridley Scott's *The Martian*. In it, astronaut Mark Watney (Matt Damon) travels to Mars with a crew made up of some of Hollywood's hottest young things (*House of Cards*' Kate Mara, *Interstellar*'s Jessica Chastain), gets himself stranded, and is forced to survive using limited supplies and his own ingenuity. "I'm gonna have to science the shit out of this," as Watney somewhat cringingly puts it. Meanwhile, Jeff Daniels plays Teddy Sanders, the man trying to orchestrate the rescue mission back on little

old Earth. We caught up with *The Newsroom* star about blockbusters, space travel and why he's happy here on terra firma.

ESQUIRE: So tell us about Teddy. **JEFF DANIELS:** He's the bureaucrat at Nasa weighing up the risks of the mission, who decides it's better to lose one life than several. He says the things no one else wants to. **ESQ:** What makes *The Martian* different to other space action movies? **JD:** Well, it makes heroes out of people who know maths! It's a bit like *Apollo 13*, when they're trying to get [Tom] Hanks back safely by improvising maths and science on the fly.

Same deal here. It's pretty exciting stuff. **ESQ:** Did you read the Andy Weir novel the movie is based on?

JD: Was that a requirement of this interview? Give me 20 minutes, I'll speed-read it... No, I've never really taken to sci-fi. I just got the job then went straight to Budapest and relied on Ridley Scott, who is a good guy to rely on. ESQ: It's a movie partly set on Mars, but Teddy stays put. Did you ever wish you were up in the spaceship?

JD: No way! Look at what they had to wear every day, those space suits. I have no idea how they did the weightlessness thing, but it can't be good. It's either gonna be harnesses, or you're up in a plane spinning around at 40,000ft... I was very happy to be on the ground in Houston wearing a suit.

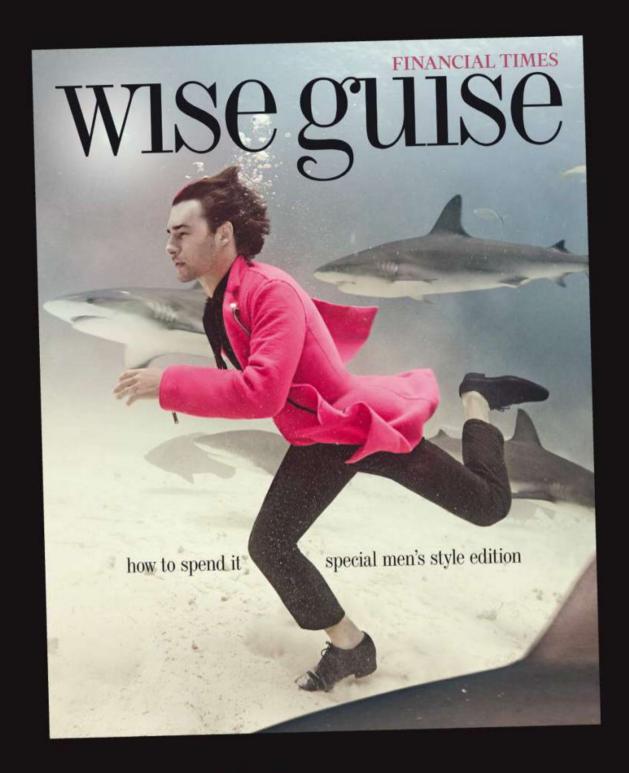
ESQ: Do you think it's important we keep exploring space?

JD: It's nice to know what's out there, but it isn't necessarily going to make my Friday any better, you know? I'd rather see the bits of Earth I haven't been to yet - Scotland, say than do flybys of Jupiter or whatever. Though if I did go, I'd leave my cell phone at home and just take my guitar. That'd be good. **ESQ:** Making blockbusters or doing TV shows like The Newsroom: which is better? JD: TV is where the writing is, and with good writing comes better roles. On The Newsroom they kept telling us: "Go further! Go further!" Studio movies get noted to death by a junior executive saying, "Pull it back, that won't sell, forget that, cut that!" That said, there is something about walking onto a huge set like The Martian, seeing all the extras, what the designers have created, huge monitors piled 50ft high... there's a thrill. And all I have to do is say the lines. At least, I think that's all I have to do. I just love the space between "action" and "cut". That's what's so exciting, even after all these years.

— The Martian is out on 2 October



"I'd rather see the bits of Earth I haven't been to yet — Scotland, say — than do flybys of Jupiter or whatever"



NEW MEN'S STYLE MAGAZINE

FREE WITH FT WEEKEND ON SEPTEMBER 12

See also **howtospendit.com**Best Lifestyle/Leisure News Site 2015



Love (or something) will tear them apart: New Order make their first album in a decade, Music Complete, minus founding bassist Peter "Hooky" Hook

Unhooked

THERE'S A NEW NEW ORDER ALBUM AND PETER HOOK ISN'T HAPPY, BUT SHOULD YOU BE?

The rift between former Joy Division and New Order bandmates Bernard Sumner and Peter Hook has been a real shame, but also pretty funny. Once responsible for some of the great pop music of the Eighties and Nineties, since their acrimonious split in 2009 they've been more likely to crop up in the press for trading insults (Sumner wrote in his autobiography, Chapter and Verse, that working with Hook was "unbearable by the end"; Hook went for the simpler option in an interview of calling Sumner "Twatto").

So we can all probably guess what bassist Hook made of Sumner's decision to release new album Music Complete without him under the New Order name - the disputed use of which has already incited legal threats - making it the band's first entirely new record in 10 years. A statement on Hook's website offers one clue: "Everyone knows that New Order without Peter Hook is like Queen without Freddie Mercury, U2 without The Edge, Sooty without Sweep!" We're sensing he's not keen.

So, is New Order without Hooky a lost

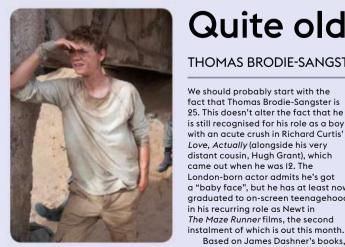


cause? If the ability to conjure up the band's trademark sound is a marker, then no: opener "Restless" has a melancholy guitar lilt that recalls 1987's "Ceremony", while "Nothing but a Fool" makes those minor to major key changes that feel both wistful and epic in that very New Ordery kind of way. As for innovation, there are more synths than for a while - even a full-blown techno-trance build on "Singularity" and Iggy Pop offers a break from Sumner's lugubrious tones by singing on "Stray Dog".

There's much to appreciate and admire,

even if some doesn't come off. But it's pleasing to see a band of New Order's stature willing to experiment with their sound, regardless of any experiments with the line-up. But wait, is that the hint of an olive branch on pacey electro closer "Superheated"? "We are so different, yet we're the same / Things that I remember that I wish I could change," sings guest vocalist Brandon Flowers. Perhaps, in the New Order story, there's another chapter and verse to come.

Music Complete (Mute) is out on 25 September



Quite old now, actually

THOMAS BRODIE-SANGSTER IS NO LONGER THAT RICHARD CURTIS KID

We should probably start with the the planned action-adventure trilogy fact that Thomas Brodie-Sanaster is follows a group of adolescent boys 25. This doesn't alter the fact that he (and an anomalous girl) trying to is still recognised for his role as a boy survive in an unforgiving dystopian with an acute crush in Richard Curtis' landscape. As second-in-command Love, Actually (alongside his very of this community, Newt is "a goodie, distant cousin, Hugh Grant), which but not a pushover at all," says came out when he was 12. The Brodie-Sangster. "He's the glue London-born actor admits he's got that holds everyone together a "baby face", but he has at least now and motivates them. But he's not graduated to on-screen teenagehood an action man. I quite like that." in his recurring role as Newt in

Of course, you may also know him from a little show called Game of Thrones, in which he played the prophetic Jojen Reed — "a genuinely nice guy in a show that's full of a lot of dicks" - and next he's keen to get his teeth into "a baddy, someone with a sinister edge".

And if that's hard to imagine right now, guess again: his surprisingly badass passion is for restoring vintage motorcycles. "I have an old 1978 Yamaha that I've built from the ground up, and a Bugatti that's a bit special," he says proudly. No three-eyed raven in the land saw that one coming.

Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials is out on IO September

Based on James Dashner's books.



Snow business: below, scenes from the mountaineering movie Everest featuring Esquire's July cover star Jake Gyllenhaal



How to conquer Everest

AND MAKE A MOVIE WHILE YOU'RE UP THERE

Director Baltasar Kormákur took his cast, crew and all his equipment to one of the most dangerous places on Earth to make Everest, a new film about a 1996 mountaineering disaster starring Jake Gyllenhaal. Here's how he managed it.

1. ACCEPT MOTHER NATURE ISN'T GOING TO HELP

"We shot most of the film at Everest and in the Dolomites [in Italy] at an altitude of 3–4,000m, the highest we could go without people getting too sick. In the Dolomites, it was –30°C and there was a 100-year record snowfall; we had avalanche warnings on our call-sheets every day. There were times we had to evacuate very quickly. Even at Base Camp, if a storm comes in and people there haven't acclimatised yet, you have to get a helicopter in to help."

2. HAVE A CAST WHO ARE REALLY UP FOR IT

"Taking a bunch of A-listers trekking up Mt Everest in January is pretty gruelling. Their assistants weren't allowed to come, or their family. We had to have electric blankets because the lodges aren't heated. We all had to share our food. None of which is exactly what these people are used to, and one or two pulled out because it was going to be too hard.

"But those who stayed really went for it. There is a scene where Jake [Gyllenhaal] is trapped up the mountain, that we shot very high up in the Dolomites. You can see his nostrils are frozen — that's not make-up! Jason [Clarke] had a terribly bruised thigh from dangling off a ladder 12m up. Everyone was sick at some point because of the altitude. The cast really bonded, put their egos to one side and worked as a team, like the characters in the film."

3. HIRE A TALENTED SPECIAL EFFECTS TEAM

"The conditions were so harsh, we had to film a lot of the scenes in a deep tank at Pinewood Studios and add backgrounds and sounds we recorded up the mountain later. It was about as complicated as special effects gets, because you're talking about a 360-degree landscape made on a green screen.

"It doesn't get recognised in the same way as a monster or something, but when special effects like this are done really well, you can't see it, and that's the hardest thing to achieve. Even the cast and crew couldn't tell





what was real and what wasn't when they saw the final cut — and they were there."

4. DON'T FORGET THE STORY, TOO

"I am really proud of the 'Why do you do it?' scene, where the climbers sit and discuss their motivation for being there. We shot it near the end when the actors had been together for six months travelling all over the world, and it just felt very organic and intimate. In a film like this, a lot of effort goes into creating epic visuals, but this one was just shot in a tent and was important for getting to know the characters."

5. COME FROM ICELAND

"I grew up walking through storms almost every morning just to get to school, so I am used to severe weather! I sail and ride horses, too, so it definitely helped, not feeling threatened by nature. All the same, you have to respect it. In Iceland, you have people flying into volcanoes as they're erupting to take selfies. On Everest, only this year there were hundreds of tourists up there when an avalanche hit. I do think there is a conversation worth having about the commercialisation of nature, which is something we explore in the film."

Everest is out on 18 September







A selection of promo posters for softcore porn movies from the Sixties and Seventies published in The Act of Seeing

Graphic imagery

DRIVE DIRECTOR NICOLAS WINDING REFN'S BACKSTREET MOVIE POSTER COLLECTION IS ALL ABOUT THE MOUTH-WATERING DESIGNS

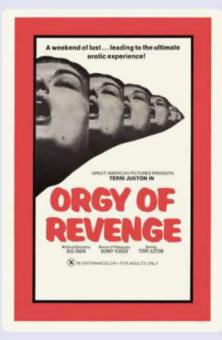
Let's not kid ourselves. It's unlikely that the men in overcoats shuffling towards the grimier movie theatres on New York's 42nd Street and in Times Square stopped to admire the graphic design work that went into the posters for the likes of Victor Peter's tale of a lonesome gal in New York, Love Me... Please! (1972) or Mario Bava's "explosive look into the psychology of a woman in love", Four Times That Night (1972). But that doesn't mean that, looking back at them now, there isn't a certain aesthetic chutzpah to the marketing devices of the late 20th century's sexploitation movies.

Which is probably what Danish director Nicolas Winding Refn, who made slick 2011 neon-and-gorefest *Drive*, was attracted to when he bought an extensive collection of US film posters. Refn has now chosen a sampling of them — specifically those which "aroused", "shocked" or "frightened" him — for a book to be published imminently under the somewhat misleadingly grandiose title *The Act of Seeing*. (The task of captioning them is nobly undertaken by British horror film expert Alan Jones.)

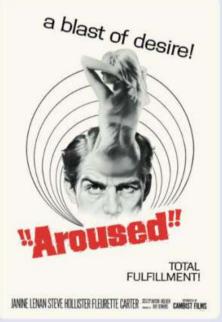
The book — which unsurprisingly focuses mostly on work from the late Fifties to the decade that decency forgot aka the Seventies — features such eye-popping titles as 1973 grindhouse stalwart The X-Rated Super Market ("see what these wives do with organic marital aids!") and 1975 nunsploitation flick Confessions of a Female Monk ("her beauty was inflammatory!"). And really, perusing its pages, who couldn't get lost for hours in the delicate pencil shading of the artwork for 1965's Hot Blooded Woman or the clever decoupage for Orgy of Revenge (1970), which is probably exactly why those men in the mackintoshes scurried past so quickly.

The Act of Seeing by Nicolas Winding Refn and Alan Jones (Fab Press) is out on 14 September











New York stories: actor Jesse Eisenbera has transitioned impressively into writing amusing tales

Jesse Eisenberg is a surprise(nberg)

THE SOCIAL NETWORK ACTOR HAS WRITTEN A BOOK. PROVING HE DOESN'T JUST ACT BRAINY

The Social Network star Jesse Eisenberg publishes his debut short story set this month, marking a transition from Hollywood actor to author that is unusual, if not entirely without precedent. Gene Hackman writes novels. Viggo Mortensen is a poet. James Franco, of course, dabbles.

But the most obvious comparison, perhaps homage, is to Woody Allen, not only because Bream Gives Me Hiccups is chiefly about growing up awkward and neurotic in a New York Jewish family, but because Eisenberg, 31, shares the older man's gift for putting an almost permanent wry smile on your face. Opener "Restaurant Reviews from a Privileged Nine-Year-Old" — the strongest piece — is written from the perspective of a sensitive young soul being hauled around New York hotspots by his alcoholic mother. It's very funny, genuinely touching and (unsurprisingly) rumoured to have been snapped up for an Amazon TV adaptation.

Along with childhood trials, we get

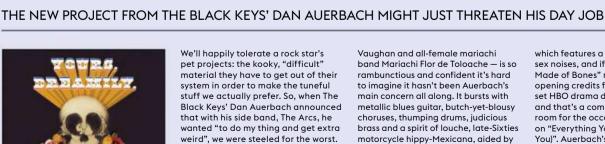


pieces on the peculiar anxieties of the digital age, some already published in The New Yorker. Paired monologues "A Post-Gender-Normative Man Tries to Pick Up a Woman at a Bar" and "A Post-Gender-Normative Woman Tries to Pick Up a Man at a Bar" cleverly skewer the Twitter generation's preoccupation with identity politics, while "My Spam Plays Hard To Get" sees the narrator judged and rejected by online sex workers and Nigerian scammers.

There are email exchanges, parodies of summer camp, medical notes in the voice of a mocking father, dialogues (Eisenberg has had some success as a playwright) and — lo and behold — some jokes, plain and simple. The constant shift in form keeps things fresh, even as some ideas inevitably work better than others. With his pensive and occasionally downtrodden demeanor, Eisenberg has made an unlikely movie star (though he's bagged the role of Lex Luther in next year's Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice). Perhaps being an author — albeit a very funny one — is a more obvious fit. But it is when he writes more and jokes less that Eisenberg's prose really sings, leading you to hope he takes the plunge and writes a proper novel soon. But his thoroughly enjoyable debut will more than do for now.

Bream Gives Me Hiccups (Grove Press UK) is out on 8 September

Arcs of triumph





As it happens, Yours, Dreamily, the debut from The Arcs — long-time pals and collaborators Auerbach and Richard Swift plus Leon Michels, Homer Steinweiss, Nick Movshon, Kenny

the skull'n'flowers sleeve art and the mariachi ladies (Auerbach admits to a strong Grateful Dead influence).

The weirdest it gets is a dissonant honky tonk number "Come δ Go",

which features a woman making porny sex noises, and if a track such as "Pistol Made of Bones" made it on to the opening credits for the next Southernset HBO drama don't be surprised and that's a compliment. There's even room for the occasional joke reference on "Everything You Do (You Do For You)". Auerbach's talent and melodic sensibilities can't be suppressed, no matter how hard he tries.

Yours, Dreamily by The Arcs is out on 4 September (Nonesuch)

10

Dead easy: Norwegian Morten Viskum draws by hand, below. Tom Hardy as the Kray twins, bottom

Digital art

ARTIST MORTEN VISKUM PAINTS
WITH ANOTHER MAN'S HAND
— TO WHICH THE OTHER MAN IS
NO LONGER ATTACHED

Of the many artworks that will be on show at the Start art fair at the Saatchi Gallery in London in September, Morten Viskum's contribution will be one of the few with at least three major talking points. The first will be the life-size silicon model of the Norwegian artist dressed as Charlie Chaplin, one of a series he's been making for the last 11 years (he has previously dressed his silicon likenesses as Jesus Christ, a praying Muslim, and a steroid-pumped body builder). The second will be three posters of the Charlie Hebdo magazine cover from January this year featuring the Prophet Mohammed holding up a "Je suis Charlie" sign. The third will be that each poster will have the cartoon drawings of the prophet obscured with paint, which has been applied using a severed hand. As in, a hand belonging to a dead guy. Got that? Good.

"How can one possibly make a selfportrait with reference to such a tragedy without adding fuel to the fire?" says Viskum, explaining his artistic response to the *Charlie Hebdo* massacre in Paris earlier this year. "From the very start it was Charlie Chaplin that came to my mind. He was able to caricature controversial people and situations. He reached millions of people."

As for recreating the incendiary imagery of the French satirical magazine's front cover, Viskum is fairly sure he's on safe ground: "As long as the prophet is not depicted in a picture, it should be tolerated," he says. (Bear in mind this is an artist whose previous works include replacing jars of olives on supermarket shelves with jars of pickled baby rats — clearly he's not out there to make friends.)

But what about the way in which he's chosen to obscure the prophet? How exactly is he expecting that to go down?

Viskum is somewhat gnomic on this point: "In my naivety I believe in peace and love and this is my humble contribution to one of the greatest challenges of our time," he replies. He won't say exactly where he sources his unique paint-applicators, though he does reveal he has seven of them in total, "each with a unique brushstroke", that he uses water-based paint and lacquer so that he can rinse them easily, and stores them in formaldehyde between projects. So, in this respect, at the very least, Morten Viskum is keeping his hands clean.

Start runs from IO-I3 September at the Saatchi Gallery, London SW3; startartfair.com





The latest Krays

MEET THE ONLY MAN WHO CAN ACT TOM HARDY OFF THE SCREEN

We've all got the message that Tom Hardy is a very fine actor, one of our best, in fact. So, it's hard to know how else he could still prove it. Play a homeless, schizophrenic drug addict? (Stuart: A Life Backwards. Check.) Portray a criminally insane baldy beefcake? (Bronson. Check) Resuscitate a beloved action franchise? (Mad Max. Check.) How about both leads in the same film? As of this month; check.

Legend, directed by Brian Helgeland, is about the Krays, the identical-twin, East London mobsters who have somehow been sanitised in the British consciousness as national treasures (yes they eviscerated Jack "The Hat" McVitie with a carving knife, but they loved their mum and a nice cup of tea). Hardy plays both tough but rational Reggie, who'd rather be running a night club and stepping out with the missus, and the unhinged, volatile Ronnie, who'd rather be breaking people's faces and shacked up in a woodland caravan with a boy.

The way Hardy separates the performances shows why he's the business. As Ronnie he's got specs, plus false teeth to even out Reggie's (and his own) rather more erratically arranged set. But while he plays Reggie as a trad gangster with muddled morals, Hardy's Ronnie is an unexpectedly peculiar and comic treat in a film that, let's face it, isn't full of laughs. For this alone they should give the man a Bafta. If not two.

Legend is out on 9 September

Esquire

Culture

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Mexican standoff: Autodefensas vigilantes gather at a rally against the nation's vicious drug racketeers in a scene from Cartel Land, below

Everyman's land

A DISTURBING NEW DOC TRAILS ANTI-CARTEL VIGILANTES ON BOTH SIDES OF THE US/MEXICO BORDER

Early on in producer-director Matthew Heineman's riveting documentary Cartel Land, captured in a greenish night-vision glow, Tim "Nailer" Foley and his rag-tag Arizona Border Recon cohorts pick their way along a barbed wire fence in the Altar Valley. They're looking for human traffickers, drug smugglers and scouts crossing the border from Mexico; they have abandoned any hope legitimate authorities might do this dirty work. For Nailer, it's a simple moral imperative: "I believe what I am doing is good, and what I am standing up against is evil."

A thousand miles away in Michoacán, Mexico, other everyday heroes are also mobilising. Seeking to end the horrific violence drug cartels have wrought on their towns, these residents — many of them old men past their fighting prime — are forming vigilante militias, running the gangsters out of town in chaotic, haphazard gun battles.

Their de facto leader and figurehead for the Autodefensas movement is Dr José Manuel Mireles. While Foley hands captives to the authorities, Mireles sets up road blocks, hunts known offenders, and is seen instructing a henchman how to deal with a cartel suspect: "get everything you can out of him and put him in the ground. Immediately."

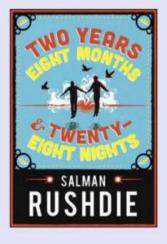
But, as the film painfully reflects, it's not long before the notions of Old Testament justice make the good and bad guys harder to tell apart. Hearing rumours that vengeance is being meted out by the Autodefensas with the same savagery the cartels once inflicted, Dr Mireles—a Shakespearean antihero with, as is revealed, a Shakespearean fatal flaw—starts to understand the purifying ideals of

his group are becoming clouded with blood.

The incidences of corruption in *Cartel Land* — which is so close to the action that you can more or less hear bullets whistling past — are staggering and astonishing. The Mexican portion is as grim and fascinating a portrait of the motives of men as any you'll see. It leaves Nailer and his border crusaders looking like kids kicking around in the dust.

Cartel Land is out on 4 September





Genie therapy

SALMAN RUSHDIE GOT HIS NEW NOVEL OUT OF HIS SYSTEM QUICKER THAN EVEN HE EXPECTED

It's probably disheartening for any tortured would-be novelists to hear Salman Rushdie announce, as he did earlier this year, that the writing of his latest novel, Two Years Eight Months & Twenty-Eight Nights, was a relative breeze, or, as he put it, "like clearing my throat". Admittedly for an author whose most well-known books, Midnight's Children (which earned him the Booker of Bookers) and The Satanic Verses (which earned him a fatwa),

both clock in around 500 pages, his latest, at 280 pages or so, is relatively slim. But still.

You might also expect a smaller novel to mean a less ambitious set-up, but underestimate Rushdie at your peril. Not only is he reinterpreting the premise of the One Thousand and One Nights, in which Scheherazade told her jealous husband an epic series of cliffhanging bedtime stories to stop him executing her in the morning, he's

also weaving in the language of philosophy, history and comic books in his own delightedly sardonic style to tell a multi-generational story of genies (or more correctly, jinn), scholars, apocalyptic storms, missing earlobes, and slits in the space-time continuum. But we expected nothing less.

Two Years Eight Months & Twenty-Eight Months by Salman Rushdie is out on IO September (Jonathan Cape)





KARAM SETHI IS NOT EXACTLY cool. He is a chinos and cashmere sweater guy, the clothes of a man a decade older than he is, which is a precocious 31. He is shy, introverted company at least until you've met him a few times or he's drunk a few cocktails. He is an excellent, mostly self-taught chef, but he's not zany like Heston Blumenthal or a game-changer like Noma's René Redzepi. His careers teacher at school probably didn't direct him towards a job in hospitality. His parents wanted him to be a banker.

But, in one respect at least, Sethi is basically a genius. It's almost a superpower he possesses. He knows what you want to eat. You might not even know you want to eat it. Actually, you might not even know that this thing that you really want to eat even exists just yet. But, on previous evidence, he'll make it and you will.

This gift Sethi has is not something he was born with. He launched his first restaurant, Trishna, in London's Marylebone in late 2008 aged 24. The food — upmarket Indian, focusing on the coastal cuisine of the south-west - was decent, the setting inoffensively millennial, but it didn't sing. Moreover, the financial crisis had reached the holy-shit stage and the restaurant's core clientele was now (pretending to be) chastened. "Lehman Brothers had just gone tits up, so there were a few times we were worried initially," recalls Sethi, as we sit in a booth at the back of Trishna, waiting for tandoori lamb chops and two Koliwada Kooler cocktails. "But there's never been a point where we've thought, 'This is not for us. It's not going to happen. We're not going to succeed."

His second restaurant, Gymkhana in Mayfair, which opened in September 2013, made Sethi's name. That is, made his name figuratively, as few people outside the industry have any idea who he is. This is mostly his choice and certainly his preference. (Sethi is in business with two even-more-silent partners: his older brother, Jyotin, who looks after the money, and younger sister Sunaina, who's in charge of drinks; collectively they are JKS Restaurants.)

No one saw the success of Gymkhana coming: the venture had not started life as a street-food, word-of-mouth sensation; the owners didn't have an address book full of celebrities, critics and food-world insiders. But, on the press night, the Evening Standard's Fay Maschler came and then she returned the next day for lunch. One dish, the Wild Muntjac Biryani, sent her into a reverie about founding father of nouvelle cuisine Paul Bocuse and his iconic soupe auxtruffes, while the experience, she trilled, "can only be described as magnificent"; Maschler awarded Gymkhana her sixth five-star review in four decades on the job.



Bao on Lexington Street in London's Soho serves gua bao (steamed buns) and other Taiwanese delights

Trishna in Marylebone has a Michelin star for its coastal cuisine from south west India; the dining room, far right

Giles Coren, *The Times*' scabrous critic and *Esquire*'s editor-at-large, went one better: he made an unprecedented three trips in one week, eating 25 of the 34 savoury dishes on the menu. In December 2013, he wrote, "Gymkhana is the best restaurant I have ever been to." He realised this was a "ludicrous" statement to make so he qualified it, but only reluctantly. "Let's just say it has the best food I have ever eaten."

It wasn't just the critics who were in a sweat about Gymkhana. Chefs called in favours to sneak a table: Blumenthal and Redzepi, also Raymond Blanc, Anthony Bourdain, Sat Bains and Pierre Koffmann. Their endorsement was evident in the 2014 National Restaurant Awards, voted for by 150 chefs, restaurateurs and gourmands. Sethi had been hoping for a spot in the top 30 for Gymkhana, which had been open for just nine months. It placed first: the restaurant was officially the best in Britain. If proof were needed that "fine dining" was dead, long live "affordable fine casual", or something, here it was.

"We thought it was a wind-up, a complete and utter piss-take," admits Sethi. "We're not really the best restaurant in the UK. There are better restaurants out there."

Sethi stops; he doesn't entirely believe that and it shows. He goes on, "You hear noises of your competitors saying, 'Why the fuck are they winning these awards? They're just a curry house.' We might be,



but you don't see curry houses doing dosas with slow-cooked Chettinad duck, or duck egg bhurji, an Indian scrambled egg dish we serve with lobster. It hit the sweet spot basically, people got it. They came to Gymkhana and they just got the place."

THE FIRST INDIAN RESTAURANT in London was almost certainly the Hindostanee Dinner and Hooka Smoking House, which opened in Portman Square in 1810. The entrepreneur behind it, Saik Deen Mahomad, was a Bengali, who joined the army aged 10 and became a surgeon. He hoped to entice the traders of the East India Company who had developed a taste for "currie" — a word that didn't really exist in India but

"You hear noises of your competitors going, Why the f**k are they winning these awards? They're just a curry house'"

was coined by the British to describe any dish featuring a sauce made with chilli and spices — on their travels. Home delivery was even available "by giving previous notice". Regrettably the restaurant didn't quite catch on and within two years Mahomad had filed for bankruptcy and scurried off to Brighton to set up a vapour massage baths.

These days there are around 10,000 traditional curry houses in Britain and you're probably fed up with being told that chicken tikka masala is now our national dish. Two hundred years on from the Hindostanee Dinner and Hooka Smoking House, though, many elements of these operations are recognisably similar. The proprietors are not necessarily experienced chefs but, like Mahomad, immigrants — from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh mainly — no longer deemed qualified for the job they did back



home. The food, then and now, makes little claim to be authentic or regional, only to appeal to a desensitised and undiscriminating British palette.

"When you talk about a curry house, they are typically run by lazy people," Sethi says. "Just the food colour — I know the shortcuts they take: serving one sauce with three different proteins. It's given Indian food a bad name. It's not the real, traditional food you'd find in India, basically. It's a bastardisation of a cuisine tailored to the curry-and-pint crowd of the Eighties and early Nineties.

"India's hugely diverse; it's like Europe," he continues. "There are eight languages spoken and about 64 regional cuisines. The food they eat in Tamil Nadu in the south compared to Lucknow in the north is like the difference between French and Spanish food."

Giles Coren is even more scathing. "Whenever we eat Indian food, it all basically tastes the same," he tells me. "I'll go out for my annual football dinner with the boys and it's delicious but you can't tell the difference between a prawn and a piece of mutton. The idea of a local high-street Indian doing a tasting menu, or different sharing dishes, is ridiculous. It's like: small brown thing followed by small brown thing followed by small brown thing... And it all comes out of the same hole, usually very quickly."

The menu at Gymkhana, which Sethi created and oversaw, was not setting out to reinvent Indian cuisine. That had been done in London a decade before, in 2001, when Tamarind and the now-closed Zaika had become the first restaurants from the subcontinent to win Michelin stars; Trishna, once Sethi had fired the launch chef and taken over at the stove himself, joined them on Bibendum's list in 2012. At Gymkhana, however, Sethi wanted to have fun with the curiously overlooked middle ground between these modern highend Indian places and the high-street curry house. The setting was informal - no tablecloths, attentive but not sycophantic service and the food was presented family-style; that is, dumped in the middle of the table for everyone to fight over.

Sethi's singular innovation at Gymkhana, though, was to twist familiar Indian dishes in unexpected ways. So, a vindaloo was on the menu, but it was made from suckling pig cheeks. The meat in the biryani that Maschler rated the best "I've had outside of Hyderabad" was wild muntjac, a small deer taken down by a stalker on the Berkshire Downs, and it was served with pomegranate and mint raita. A curry of minced goat could be supplemented with creamy *bheja* (sautéed brains), for an additional £3. Such was the confidence in Gymkhana that this





last dish became one of the most popular offerings on the menu.

"There's just a finesse and a love at Gymkhana and there's no sense of contempt," Coren says. "Indians are generally very polite but basically we are oppressive, pasty-faced slave masters who don't understand them, and why should they bother to lay themselves on the line to show us the best of their cuisine when we are just ungrateful, imperialist swine? And that's not the attitude at Gymkhana."

So, two years on, does Coren stand by his review? "Well, I've just booked a table for my mother's birthday, so I'm clearly still into it. Nowhere has been so surprisingly good since."

The food was one element, but where Gymkhana really stood apart was that now — for perhaps the first time in Britain - going for a curry was aspirational. An Indian restaurant had become a key stop on the paparazzi circuit; the kind of place where Nigella Lawson, in the midst of her excruciating court case, escaped to eat with Salman Rushdie. Or, as happened a few nights before I meet Sethi, Gwyneth Paltrow dined with a table of girlfriends next to a raucous gathering hosted by Vijay Mallya, the Indian politician and sports tycoon. No longer was it food that, if you had it for lunch, you'd need to have a lie down afterwards. An Indian meal was now something you could enjoy at the beginning of an evening before going on elsewhere, not just a booze-soaking afterthought.

Sethi modestly deflects some of these compliments. He had an idea about what people wanted to eat and the style and setting they might enjoy it in. "You can slate those curry houses but they did a lot of work in getting people familiar with the spices and flavours," he says. "With papadum and naan, biryani and butter chicken, all those classics that are probably more famous in this country than in India. That level of spice, it gets you, you crave it after a while. You just want more and more and more of it. It's food that gets you addicted."

SETHI'S BACKGROUND, HE ACCEPTS, is not that of most Indian chefs and restaurateurs. His father, Harash, a chartered accountant from Delhi, came to Britain in the Seventies; his mother Meena joined him a few years later and the family lived in

Finchley, North London. Karam attended Haberdashers' Aske, a high-achieving public school in Hertfordshire. Summers were spent in Delhi, playing cricket and watching their grandparents' cooks at work. On special occasions, they would go out to Gymkhana Club or the dining room at the Delhi Golf Club. Two decades later, these visits were evoked by Sethi in the interior design of Gymkhana, with Raj-era, clubby wooden booths, whooshing ceiling fans, taxidermy and sepia photographs of sportsmen.

Harash and Meena had entrenched, fairly traditional hopes for their children, but Karam was stubborn. "You could tell he wasn't going to go down the normal route of Asian kids growing up, who become bankers, lawyers, accountants," remembers Jyotin, his brother, who was a venture capitalist before JKS. "He had that naughty streak. He wasn't obedient. He didn't follow orders. My parents introduced him to banks and he basically didn't turn up to interviews."

"I just always knew what I wanted to do," says Sethi. "My first work experience at school, aged 15, was at a hotel in Stuttgart in the kitchens. I was getting laughed at by all the other boys who were going to banks, but I thought, 'I know what I want to do and you don't, so let's see where we are in 15 years.' And now they are coming to eat in the restaurants and begging for tables."

From Trishna, we Uber into Soho and now sit at the bar of Duck and Rice, Alan Yau's reimagined boozer and chop suey restaurant. Sethi orders us two halves of unpasteurised Pilsner Urquell, delivered weekly from the Czech Republic, which is stored in a blingy golden canister by the entrance. The choice of location is a considered one: before Sethi had even heard of Alan Yau, he wanted to be Alan Yau. Again, the name might not be that familiar, but few people have been so influential in improving the way that Londoners - not exclusively, but mostly - eat. In 1992, Yau founded Wagamama in Bloomsbury and convinced us to share tables and spend £10 on Japanese noodles. Yau became unfathomably wealthy when he sold the chain in 1998 and he has since done, among others, high-end Cantonese, a tea and dim sum parlour, an Italian bakery and a Turkish pizza joint.

"I study all his restaurants," says Sethi. "He's way ahead with trends. Like, ramen is a trend today, but he was doing ramen with Wagamama 20 years ago. What he did with dim sum was unbelievable. When he opens a restaurant, there's no expense spared, every detail is considered. He's the god of London restaurants in terms of what he's done."

Sethi and JKS are not doing badly in building a diverse empire of their own. The family personally manages and oversees "I knew what I wanted to do. I was laughed at by boys who went into banks. Now they eat in the restaurants, begging for tables"

Trishna and Gymkhana, but from 2012, it began investing in young chefs Sethi found talented and enterprising. There are now four London restaurants in the portfolio: Bubbledogs and Kitchen Table in Fitzrovia, run by husband-and-wife James Knappett, a chef, and Sandia Chang, a sommelier; James Lowe's impeccable Lyle's in Shoreditch; and Bao, in Soho, creators of the fluffiest, most ethereal gua bao (steamed buns) this side of Taiwan.

This last investment was "the biggest risk", according to Sethi, ostensibly because the team behind Bao — sister and brother Wai Ting and Shing Tat Chung, and Chung's girlfriend Erchen Chang — were design students not chefs. It has also been the most conspicuous success, with queues snaking down the block ever since it opened in April. No London launch has been so fussed over by critics and diners since Gymkhana.

Alan Yau, who has met Sethi only in passing, appreciates what he has seen. "You can read a lot into how people set out their menu," says Yau. "Particularly at Gymkhana, I like the Anglicised approach to the layout — the journey. The art of restaurateuring is likened to film-making, it requires many disciplines to come together. It also reflects the director's personal attributes. For me Karam represents the next generation going forward."

A FEW STREETS FROM DUCK AND RICE. we pop into Bao, guiltily but shamelessly queue-jump — "You have to be subtle," whispers Sethi, "there's been real problems with queue rage" - and scoff a few buns. Then it's on to the mother ship, Gymkhana. As we walk, Sethi — who stopped working dayto-day in the kitchen 18 months ago, but still develops new dishes - pre-emptively fusses about what he'll find. "I know I'll see 20 things I don't like," he predicts. "There will be dust on a stool or a bit on the floor that has not been restained, because it's an antique floor. Anyone who wants to achieve this level has to be obsessive, almost OCD. With the expectations people have, it needs to be identical every single day."

Upon arrival, 3pm on a Friday afternoon, Gymkhana is not as ramshackle as Sethi feared. In fact, he seems overcome by a proprietorial pride — or maybe it's the effects of the Black Samurai sake we downed as we left Bao. Sethi sourced much of the decoration himself or it comes from his extensive personal archive of sporting memorabilia.

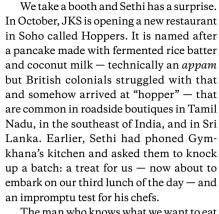
Top right, Gymkhana's Quinine Sour cocktail is created with gin, tonic syrup, ginger, fresh curry leaf, lemon and egg white. Right, removing the dough crust reveals the full glory of Gymkhana's Wild Muntjac Biryani. Below, influential chef, entrepreneur and talent spotter Karam Sethi





Prized possessions include a 2008-'09 Barcelona shirt autographed by the squad and their then-manager Pep Guardiola and a programme from the 100th Manchester derby, signed by Sir Matt Busby and Sir Alex Ferguson. He also has Mahendra Singh Dhoni's match-worn pads from his final one-day international. These are not on display, though, but kept in tissue paper and bubble wrap and stored in his mum's loft.

"Food and Manchester United are the two things that get Karam going," says Jyotin Sethi. "By nature, he's shy and if you're talking about general life stuff, he's not interested at all. When these conversations are taking place he switches off completely and he's more likely to be checking Twitter or Instagram. But when somebody asks him about food, he's in the zone."

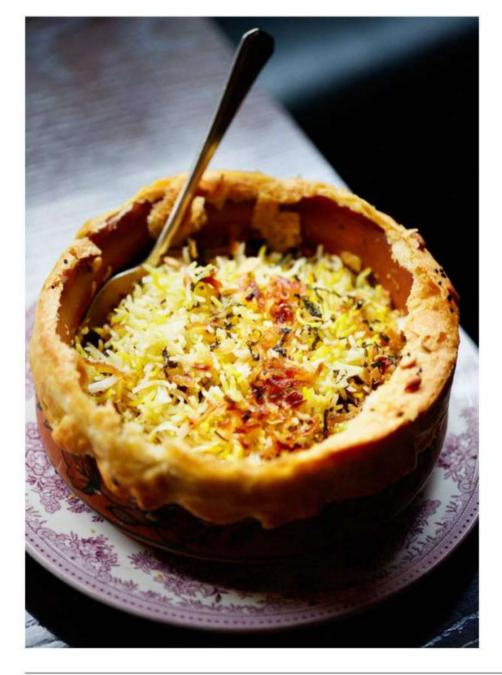


The man who knows what we want to eat thinks he has hit upon the next great dining trend. "It's not junk food," explains Sethi. "But hoppers are quick to make, relatively cheap and they taste amazing. It's kind of like the Indian hamburger."

The hopper arrives; an egg has been cracked into the middle of it while it was fried. It looks like a distant planet we haven't discovered yet. Alongside it comes a curry - or "kari", from the Tamil word meaning "sauce" - and a sambal and chutney made from pounded fresh coconut. You can attack the hopper how you choose: tear off strips or roll it into one monstrous sandwich. The other speciality of the Hoppers menu will be the dosa, those wonderful, golden wigwam-shaped crepes that have become a Gymkhana signature. They will be around half the price of their equivalent at the sister restaurant, but, with no bookings, who knows how long you will have to wait in line to order one.

"I came up with the concept of Hoppers when I was on a stag do in Ko Samui in 2013," says Sethi. "We just create restaurants we would like to eat in ourselves and Sri Lankan — specifically Tamil — food really hasn't been done properly in London yet. The cuisine is actually quite close to Southeast Asian: it's very fragrant and it's got a peppery spice, not a chilli burn. Your palette will be singing."

I take a bite of my hopper and close my eyes. I hadn't planned to do it; the reaction is involuntary. The outside of the pancake is crisp, while the egg in the centre is just set, slightly bouncy. It tastes both familiar and comforting, but also like nothing else I've ever eaten before. My eyes still shut, I have a premonition: it's a queue, a long one, and I'm standing in it. This thing I'd never wanted before, never knew existed, has now become a compulsion. Blinking back to reality, I have demolished my hopper in four greedy mouthfuls and, while Sethi looks on with evident satisfaction, I'm already thinking, "When can I have one again?" [3] Hoppers, 49 Frith Street, London W1D 4SG opens in October



Illustrations by

Miranda Collinge Wake up and smell the markup'

The 10 questionable foodie trends that should be taken off the menu (including the word "foodie")



The word 'foodie'

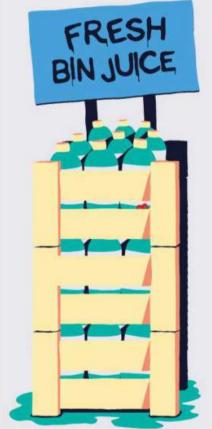
Of course we applaud the relatively recent revolution in food culture in Britain, given that we are a nation whose staple vegetable was once the swede, with the occasional marrowfat pea thrown in when occasion demanded. But changing times cause unspeakable smugness, and nothing more so than the prevalence of the word "foodie" — a neologism that

makes other new dictionary entries ("fap", "photobomb" etc) look positively profound. As far as we can work out, it denotes a human being who is interested in food. Presumably these are clearly distinguishable from those human beings who are interested in breathing: "airies"; hydration: "wateries"; and the forces of gravity: "groundies".



Internet sensation' chefs

Remember those food-truck purveyors who got stuck at the "I just made myself a stir-fry!" stage? Well, they're actually the good guys. The social-media-spherizoid is now full of scarcely pubescent teenagers whose culinary development has been arrested at the "Mummy just let me put sprinkles on my own fairycake!" stage. But what's more, this being the internet age, these preternaturally blemish-free teens with cowlick hairdos and ad exec parents have got their own YouTube channels with millions of visitors and a range of cookbooks offering you recipes such as "Milo's cheesy beans" and "Toby's Nutella on toast". Oh, and they're also considerably richer than you (though they probably were to start with).



Localism

None of us likes to think of those lonely Braeburn apples huddled in the darkened hold of a Boeing 777 en route from New Zealand to Tesco, but there are times when the obsession with provenance comes at the expense of logic. Just because that marmalade with the psychotically handwritten label was stewed by Mrs Higgins in the next village, or those tomatoes are being sold out from a wonky box at the end of someone's driveway, doesn't mean they can't still taste like shit.



or at least make dinner. The menu? Spaghetti and don't rest on our laurels, or think that we have stumbled on a legitimate business opportunity. Sadly, the recent jones for food trucks has resulted in all kinds of Haveof concepts setting up four-wheeled shops offering



Culinary DIY

Despite the comforts of modern life, as far as food is concerned we are now living in the Age of Inconvenience. Expect eyebrows to be lifted if you haven't grown your own salad leaves, milled your own flour, panned your own sea salt, butchered your own pork chops, distilled your own gin, shot your own partridge, collected your own honey, strained your own yoghurt, fermented your own pickles, and whittled your own toothpicks for afters. It's exhausting, and heaven forfend you have something else to do, such as zap your own ready-meal, watch your own telly and scratch your own nutsack.



Coffee prices

Remember when the price of a cup of coffee started creeping towards £2? "Two quid?" you spluttered, spraying chocolate flakes from the top of your cappuccino (because that was the fanciest coffee you could get back then). And you were right to be outraged: the real cost of a cup of coffee — as calculated in a study we googled — is approximately 16p (8p for coffee, 8p for milk). Now the price is edging up to £3 and we're standing by blinking dumbly like the caffeine-addled bovines we have become. What's more, the most expensive options on the chalkboard are things like Aeropress and V6o, coffee-drinking options that don't require milk — thus saving the vendor that additional 8p. Wake up and smell the markup.

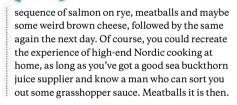


Spiralizers

There's a particular joy in looking through those gadget catalogues that come free with the Sunday newspaper and contain things like egg slicers, watermelon de-pippers, and other niche-use kitchen gadgets, and wondering what kind of numpty would actually have the naivety and impressionability to spend money on them. Well, if you've purchased a spiralizer that's you, that is. The Japanese invention and "gadget of the year" can turn anything into long noodle shapes as long as that anything is a courgette, beetroot or celeriac. It's beloved of health-obsessed lady cooks who are all peculiarly hot and will never sleep with you even if you provide the post-coital kohlrabi linguine.

Scandinavia

The pioneering efforts of René Redzepi at Noma in Denmark, followed by Sweden's Magnus Nilsson of Fäviken and Niklas Ekstedt of Ekstedt (to name just a smorgasbord), have transformed our understanding of Scandinavian cuisine. That is, as long as you can get a table. Otherwise, a trip to Stockholm or Copenhagen can be a dispiriting





Mixologists

Just when we've accepted baristas are not Mexican legal professionals but HIGHLY TRAINED people who know how to draw ferns in milk foam, there's another ludicrous profession we have to take seriously. A "mixologist" may sound a little like a 17th-century eccentric with a knobbly cane and a cape who believed that he had the ability to turn mouse droppings into gold sovereigns, but it's actually a 21st-century eccentric with a waxed moustache and suspenders who believes he has the ability to turn alcohol and juice into something more than alcohol and juice, but in a fancy glass. Time to reopen the pits.



Small plates

The small plate trend won't go away, and we're not sure why. Or rather, we are sure why — because it lets waiters suggest "seven or eight dishes between two should do it," with the misleading caveat that "you can always order more", so that you find yourselves spending main-course prices on saucers of stuff no one wanted to order that you divide with your dining companion in ever-decreasing bites so as not to be the one to take the last mouthful until you're politely fighting over sub-atomic particles of labneh and butternut squash. Make it stop.





I KNEW IT THE MOMENT I SKIPPED through arrivals and stepped out into the luscious tropical warmth of the Taipei afternoon. That here was a city I'd love, way before I ever worked out why. It started in my gut, a joyously inexplicable primal glow that streamed through my veins, and head, and muscles of my cheeks, tweaking them into the sweetest of involuntary grins.

Maybe it was those gentle smiles at customs, and the sense of heartfelt welcome, such blessed contrast to the blank-faced, purse-lipped suspicion of mainland China. Or the fact that I could actually see the sky, a smart, clean blue, unhindered by incessant, meanly pervasive, nicotine-hued smog. Here, tall trees line the wide roads like swaying guards of honour, bending their heads in arboreal bonhomie. Here, the traffic hums rather than snarls.

I'd just spent a week in Shanghai, a place of both thrusting, gleaming modernity and incomprehensibly alien froideur. A city where the shop-fresh vestments of progress barely cover the ragged undershirt of the past. There, I felt lonely and adrift, disconnected from the outside world. Tolerated, just another gormless "round eye" who simply didn't have a clue. Sure, there were international hotels with their single estate rums and \$600 views. And the discreet charm of the French Concession. Plus all that raw, cold-filtered capitalism, pulsing through Pudong. But just like the sweet, oily food of the region, it left me rather cold.

Here, though, at noon in Taipei, capital of Taiwan, I felt human once more, my senses keen, and all thoughts turning firmly towards lunch. I'd been meaning to visit Taiwan for years. Ching-He Huang, the Taiwanese-born food writer and chef, had endlessly extolled its virtues. "One of Asia's great culinary gems," she would say on the set of Market Kitchen, while whipping up some Sichuan hotpot for the hungry cameras. "The ingredients are incredible, and top quality, and the whole nation is obsessed with food. Obsessed. Beef noodles, dumplings, steamed pork sandwiches and stinky tofu..." Her eyes would gleam with greedy zeal.

Taiwan is one of those countries with which we're all familiar, yet know nothing about. Sure, we've grown up seeing Taiwan embossed on shiny plastic, affixed to hi-fi and ghetto blaster alike. Or printed next to the washing instructions on some nylon label. Back in the Eighties, pretty much everything I watched, or fed with batteries, seemed "Made in Taiwan". But those three words appeared more well-honed trademark than actual country, a vast, gleaming production line, ruled by robots and mocrochips.

So, I imagined Taipei to be a place to make the Los Angeles of Blade Runner look positively antediluvian. Soaring mega-scrapers, neon-drenched superhighways and vending machines that could sell you your soul. Tokyo meets Hong Kong meets Mega-City One. But with the exception of the splendid Taipei 101 tower, a priapic symbol of Old East clad in New West glass and steel, Taipei seems modest, discreet, mainly grey and sprawling. Far less frenetic and sultry than Bangkok, slower moving than Hong Kong, and rather more approachable than Tokyo. It's like their reserved cousin, who doesn't say much but is always effortlessly polite and eminently civilised.

"There's rather more to Taiwan than video games and calculators," smiles Enshen Huang, Ching-He's brother, and my guide for the next few days. He's smiling and open faced, educated in England, but back now in Taiwan, working for a large software company. His wife, Jasmine, an expert in Taiwanese art and jewellery, is striking and beautifully dressed. She's behind the wheel, cruising down the wide roads and astonishingly well-behaved traffic. In most Asian cities, the roads are constipated with cars, polluted with fumes and din. Here, things seem to work just fine.

"Taiwan has a totally different culture from China, a different etiquette altogether," Enshen says. Any initial awkwardness, of the forced meeting of strangers in a land far from their own, has long since dissipated. A shared love of food tends to do that within moments. But there's something in the Taiwanese character that puts one immediately at ease. Not so much a need to please than pure, old-fashioned hospitality.

Taiwan has its own constitution and democratically elected president, armed forces and freedom of speech. It very much sees itself as a separate sovereign state. The People's Republic of China (PRC), though, disagrees. It claims that the government of the Republic of China (RoC, or Taiwan) is an illegal and illegitimate one. To the PRC, Taiwan is not Taiwan, rather the "Taiwan authorities". And in its mind, the PRC remains very much in charge. It allows no international recognition of Taiwan as an independent sovereign state.

Nor any discussion of the issue, either. In the PRC, at least. Try to Google the subject when on the mainland, and you'll find nothing. Anything save the PRC version of the truth is not just censored, but banned. China still has 1,600 cruise and ballistic missiles pointed at the country, and threatens to respond with "military conflict" should Taiwan ever try to claim full independence. It's an odd state of affairs, but not one that seems to affect day-to-day life.

Tom's top Taipei tips

Where to eat and what to order

Yong He Dou Jiang Wang

Amazing comfort food breakfasts.
Eat Youtiao (deep fried dough) and crepe-like egg pancakes dipped into sweet or salty soy milk, and good dumplings. Queues in peak hours.

Gi Yuan (Seasons Garden Restaurant)

Pre-booking is essential at this unprepossessing restaurant which specialises in two-day cooked chicken soup, below. Prices are high, but for just a sip of this rich, spectacularly wonderful soup, it's worth it. Only 50 or so pots are cooked per service, and you'll need friends to help finish it. Don't miss the braised pig trotter either, it's a meaty masterpiece.



Shin Yeh

Great for traditional Taiwanese food, you'll find everything from vast "Tiger Bites Pig" steamed bao sandwiches to "three cup chicken", below, a pungent dish with sesame oil, rice wine and soy sauce



In fact, relations between the PRC and Taiwan are fine at the moment, with the same sort of free trade relation-ship with the mainland shared by Hong Kong and Macau. While most of the residents of Taiwan want independence, and see themselves as Taiwanese, they also realise that a working relationship with China is of crucial import.

Taiwan is also a country built upon, and defined by, immigration. It started with the aboriginal people, as it usually does. Then came the Chinese immigrants, mainly from Fujian province. Followed by the Dutch, who spotted the island's strategic importance. Sited between China and Japan, the Philippines and Macau, it was the perfect base for Asian trade. But the Chinese immigrants had little time for colonial rule and booted them out. By the end of the 17th century, Taiwan was governed by the Qing dynasty as a prefecture of Fujian province.

We turn into a small side street, past a Christian church and various alleyways filled with simmering food stalls and strange herbal medicines. "In April 1895, China ceded Taiwan to the Japanese, who ruled until 1945," Enshen says. "Many Taiwanese then abandoned Chinese folk worship for Shintoism, speaking Japanese, taking Japanese names and pledging allegiance to the emperor."

We get out of the car and I follow the couple upstairs into Shin Yeh, a wildly popular traditional Taiwanese restaurant. "When Japan was defeated in the war, Taiwan was placed under the control of Chiang Kaishek's Republic of China. And when, in December 1949, Chiang Kaishek's Nationalist regime was ended by Mao Zedong, he fled, along with two million refugees to Taiwan. This was his government in exile, the Republic of China. He lived here until he

died, in 1975."

Under Chiang Kaishek's party, the KMT, martial law was declared between 1948 and 1987, the longest period in world history. That meant no right to free speech or to assemble or protest, and the Taiwan Garrison Command could arrest and detain anyone. The KMT governed Taiwan until 15 years ago. "Now, we have democracy and free speech and freedom. And the majority want to be independent, and see themselves as Taiwanese rather than Chinese," Enshen says.



We're greeted by a thin, elegant lady who runs Shin Yeh. "This is Ms Chung Ya-Lin, Jasmine's aunt, who has worked here since

A pig's foot appears, glistening. It's one of the most magnificent pieces of offal ever to pass my lips

she was 16. Now she's a partner. There are branches across the country, but this is the original and best. It's a Taipei institution." We eat steamed pork intestines with sour vegetables; elegant, politely chewy, gentle and mild. And a bracingly clean, refreshing pork noodle soup, with delicate clear broth and a nose-clearing blast of white pepper.

"Taiwan wants to be independent," says Enshen between bites of *popiah*, a thin, wheat-flour pancake stuffed with crisp, grated radish, carrots and turnips. Plus slices of omelette and peanut powder: crunch and chew. "The media are totally free, and crazy for stories. They can say anything. But sometimes we can be too laidback as a country. A few months back, students invaded parliament for two weeks. Nobody did anything! They trashed the whole place and nothing happened to them. People even sent them food."

He passes over a vast *gua bao* steamed bun, bulging with slices of fatty pork, pickled mustard green, more peanut powder and coriander. "We call it 'Tiger Bites Pig'," says Jasmine, and you can see why. I struggle to get my fists, let alone my mouth, around this

great and glorious lump of highly seasoned fat and stodge. "Proper, old-fashioned winter food, filling grub for long days of manual labour," says Enshen. Forget your baguettes with limp, curled-corner cheese and pickle. This is one sandwich to rule them all, billowing steamed dough with fat and heat and salt and joy, an Asian master at whose feet all others should tremble. Its roots may be in regional China (and the likes of Momofuku group founder David Chang have propelled it to international culinary stardom) but it reaches its apex here in Taiwan.

Taiwan is, for most, a very good place to live. "The tax rate is five per cent, the standard of living high, and crime very low," Enshen says. I eye up a plate of water spinach, cooked with handfuls of soft garlic. Flavours here are straightforward, and pronounced. Not neat or dull, rather vibrant and well defined. "Taiwan is all about food and temples," Enshen continues as we climb back into the car. "We eat, and go to our Buddhist temples, to give thanks and make offerings. Then go to eat again. Now, this is the Songshan Feng Tian temple, one of our favourites." We pass through trestle tables sweating under the weight of endless offerings of money, eggs, cakes and sweets, all given to ensure a prosperous year. Incense sticks are lit for good fortune, robes donned and mantras chanted.

They locate my own special Buddha, after finding out my date of birth. He's gold with big, slanting eyebrows and a wry smile. I bung him as much money as I have on me, needing all the spiritual help I can get. They give gifts to their gods and we wander through, as they point out various Buddhas devoted to child birth, or marriage, or financial fortune, or the sea. It's a pragmatic system of worship that seems to make more sense than Christianity. Before we go, I rub a few more lucky Buddhas, and Enshen gives me some coins to feed into vast, electronic columns with gaily blinking lights, which you pay for good luck and a prayer. Food and temples, sinuously interlinked.

WE CLIMB UP AND OUT OF THE CITY, past the ex-pat schools and expensive villas, and into the lush, tropical hills with their endless shades of verdant green. The air is thick with the stink of sulphur, and baths, public and private, greet us at every turn. We look down, over Taipei, light grey and gently expansive, with three great brown rivers snaking through its heart, and that delicate Taipei 101 tower, tiered and magnificent, its tip poking through the clouds. We drive up higher still, past pink-blooming cherry blossom trees, and sudden explosions of crimson petals and garishly red temples, swaying palm trees and burbling brooks.



"There is a tradition of home cooking," says Enshen as darkness falls and we descend, slowly, back into the urban mass. "But you see more in the south, where it's still agricultural. In the city, life moves faster. There are seven million people here, all obsessed with food. We eat take-out perhaps four times a week. From the night markets. Everything is so convenient and cheap. Good, too."

We stop at a traditional tea house. "Taiwanese tea is world famous," Jasmine says as she expertly douses a mound of rare and precious leaves with freshly boiled water. "It's all about quality control. Thousands of tonnes are exported to China. There's just no quality control in China." It's pure, clean and light yellow, with a pleasant bitterness at the back. We nibble fried pumpkin chips and hot coconut bread and sit, gassing, in a mild caffeine buzz.

"These old tea houses are disappearing fast," says Enshen, pointing at the intricately carved wooden walls and rather less charming modern "water features". "They're a place to sit back and let the world pass by, a feature of a less hurried time. But restaurants can make far more money, so they're all changing over. It's sad. Tea is a key part of Taiwanese life."

But there's little time to linger over a brew, however good. Chicken soup is calling, and it's no ordinary broth, rather a two-day cooked version famed across the land. Gi Yuan (Seasons Garden Restaurant), is in the centre of Taipei, and looks unremarkable save the 50 large ceramic pots in the open kitchen, bubbling away over 50 specially made burners. It's a stirring sight. "You have to book your soup in advance, and once all the soups have been reserved, that's it," I'm informed. It's not cheap either. Prices are steep — more than £200 a pot — more if you're adding abalone.

But I'm not allowed to put my hand anywhere near my pocket, the whole time I'm there. Despite trying. Again and again and again. In the end, I give up. "You are our guest," the couple both say, and that is that. We sit downstairs, in a low, expensive glow, among well-scrubbed, Rolex- and Cartiersporting diners. It's the only expensive place that we visit, but I soon realise that perfection has a price.

A pig's foot appears, vast and glistening beneath a shimmering, burnt umber slick. Braised with soy sauce, yellow wine and rock sugar, it's not only one of the most magnificent pieces of offal ever to pass my lips, but a serious contender for greatest thing a cook could ever do to any part of a pig. Seriously, I don't know where to start. The wobbling, seductive fat, so obscenely rich and decadent and filthily sexy that my

taste buds hardly know where to look. This sort of thrilling depravity must be illegal. Then soft meat, great nuggets of sweet, piggy delight, oinking of farmyards and incredible succour. "Good, eh?" smiles Jasmine. I just nod, my gob filled with swine, lost in my own greedy reverie.

But then comes the soup. Jesus Christ, that soup. A titan, a triumph, pure liquid bliss. The broth is simmered for two days, with pigs' feet and dried scallops and God knows what else, before stage two, when specially bred chicken is added to poach. Jasmine's a purist and doesn't rate the abalone used by the restaurant. So, she brings her own,

tinned (about \$100 a can), from Chile, "the best, and for a soup like this, only the best will do". Amen to that. She gives the can to the waiter and he bears it off to the kitchen.

Back to that soup. It has the most profound chicken tang, and sumptuous depth and extraordinary richness. So much so that I want to strip off, jump in and wallow in this umami-tinged magic. But that might be frowned upon. Instead, I moan and coo and gasp and sigh and slurp. The soup has the texture of liquid silk and the taste of poultry paradise. Pig's foot and chicken soup; two fairly everyday dishes, taken here to the most heady and

astonishing heights.

But no time to linger.

We have a night market to tackle. "Ah, the night markets," cries Enshen, still savouring that soup, "an essential part of our eating culture. Cheap and fresh and the flavours are amazing. Everyone eats on the street, from politi-

cian to road sweeper. And some of the stall holders are rich. They might have sat for 30 or 40 years, selling the same noodles or stinky tofu or whatever. But you can make a huge amount of money. They might have five flats, and send their children to boarding school in Europe, Japan or the States. They want the best for their kids, and want them to leave the stall, to break the cycle, to get a decent job in the growing modern



Din Tai Fung

This Shanghai soup dumpling chain has conquered the world but it started in a tiny Taipei stall. The broth is rich and flavoured, the pastry perfect and the meat properly piggy. Try oysters on top of a fried doughnut, above

Addiction Aquatic Development

Crazy name, wonderful food.
Tokyo-quality sushi and sashimi bars, then upstairs for king crab hot pot.
Stock up on international gourmet goods at its very smart deli.

Yong-Kang Beef Noodle

Beef noodle soup, left, is more religion than dish in Taiwan. Everyone has their favourite but this famed place is damned good. A rich, spicy broth (go *Hong shao* style), fresh, bouncy noodles and soft, fatty hunks of beef. Superb.

Mandarin Oriental Taipei

A sumptuous palace every bit the equal of its sister hotels in Tokyo, New York and The Landmark, Hong Kong. Praise indeed. Exceptional, warm service, near-perfect rooms and a bed you never want to leave. I don't usually rave about hotels but this is an international classic. Once you've stayed here, nowhere else will do.



industries. You can be very successful."

By now, five minutes have passed without eating, so a brief detour to Chia Te Bakery, another national institution that sells famed pineapple cake, is imperative. I feign excitement but really would rather save the remaining grains of space left in my bulging belly for street food. The cakes, though, are good - of course they are lithe, light and resolutely uncloying. But I'm beginning to struggle now. It's been a heavy day's scoffing, and there's still a few more miles to go. Raohe Street Night Market runs down one street, about half a mile long, with stalls selling everything from Lego knock-offs to

fortune-telling budgies.

We wander down, through the ever-munching crowds, grabbing a charred corn on the cob here (soft, buttery, fierce with chilli powder), a frilly edged oyster omelette (Oh ah jian) there, with sweetly spicy sauce, bitter green leaves and plump bivalves. We pass petite teenagers sipping on herb-laden pork-bone soup, nibbling daintily on the great lumps of bone.

Pork belly rice (Lou ba beng), soothing comfort, with slivers of soft skin and chopped mushrooms and soy; a peppery, beef filled pastry (Hu jiao bing), a cousin of our own Cornish pasty; crisp, deep-fried, paper-thin sheets of dried beef with a cinnamon tang: Ba-wan, hulking great meatballs, the size of a heavyweight's fist, wrapped in a chewy, glutinous skin. And stinky tofu. Bloody stinky tofu, whose shitty, tropical sewer stench permeates the air for miles around. It's a delicacy, and the taste is marginally more acceptable than the pong. But only marginally. I'll eat most things, but give me raw tripe, donkey cock, even a service station fry-up over this fetid filth. "You always eat stinky tofu on the street," Enshen advises. "Cook it at home and the place stinks for weeks." I discreetly slip the contents of my paper plate straight into a bin.

All ages, all classes wander up and down, nibbling, chewing, chatting, drinking. It's a thoroughly democratic place, scrupulously clean, yet with rough edges very much intact. But it's late now, and I can eat no more. I've hit the wall, and can think of only lying down, on a soft bed, in cool air

conditioning. Enshen and Jasmine drop me off at my hotel and I stagger into bed, my belly distended. I fall asleep, dreaming of soup.

AND AWAKE IN SEARCH OF BREAKFAST. At

Yong He Dou Jiang Wang, or Yong the Soy Milk King. This is another Taipei institution, where deep fried dough (*Youtiao*) is dipped in sweet or salted soy milk, like oriental churros. It's bland, warm and comforting. We eat pork and shredded white cabbage wrapped in thin rice pancakes, and crepe-like egg pancakes, dipped in the milk. And soya milk with peanuts, sweet and clean. No doubt about it, Yong is most definitely the Soy Milk King. The queues stretch down the road but move quickly, as office workers and traffic cops and construction workers stop by on their way to work. Cheap, filling and typically democratic, too.

This, though, is simply breakfast part one. Its sequel, like The Godfather: Part II, is better still. Din Tai Fung is a dizzyingly successful chain of restaurants that stretches from America to Australia, specialising in the perfect Shanghai soup dumpling. It all started here. Jasmine remembers when it was just one small stall downstairs. It's been going 43 years, and again, it's mobbed. You can see why. The broth is exquisite, searing hot, slightly sweet and packed full with piggy allure. The dough is just thick enough to restrain the amber liquid from bursting through. Make a small hole, suck out that incredible nectar then top with sliced ginger, soy sauce and chilli oil, and finish off that ball of pig.

Years of culinary training now come into play, as we go from double breakfast to lunch at the curiously named Addic-

We go from double breakfast to lunch. I crawl back to the hotel, part-man, part-fish, all pig

tion Aquatic Development. It doubles as a fish market — with gushing tanks containing oysters and crabs (swimming, hairy and blue) and squirting clams — plus a supermarket that makes America's Dean & DeLuca look Third World. Sushi-grade fish and finest Provençal olive oil, dried abalone and Orangina and claret. We stand by the sushi bar and eat buttery *o-toro* (tuna belly) streaked with fat, the rice warm, soft

and near-perfect. *Uni* (sea urchin), is as decadent and filthy as ever, both slut and virginal debutante, all in one bite. A hot pot, too, with hairy king crab legs, bubbling broth, salty oysters and sweet clams. I crawl back to the hotel, part-man, part-fish, all pig, having feasted on Japanese food every bit the equal of Tokyo's best.

My Final Meal in Taipei is eaten alone, on a wobbling stool, in a small, nondescript room with scuffed lino floors, laminated menus and cramped, communal tables. The place reeks of dripping, in a good way, as it should. For this is Yong-Kang Beef Noodle, another famous local joint, but one among many famous beef noodle joints. Because beef noodle is more than mere soup, rather an edible statement of Taiwanese identity. It has roots in China (beef was not a traditional Buddhist meat), and was brought over with Chiang Kai-shek's soldiers. But it was quickly incorporated into the heart and belly of Taiwan.

Workers in dust-choked overalls sit next to designer-clad darlings and weary policemen. Again, I'm struck by the true democracy of Taiwanese food. Everyone has their own favourite place, and all will argue that theirs is the best. You can pay £50 for a bowl, and also £1. Here, it's about £5. The roar of air-conditioning, the gentle murmur of slurped noodles, the clatter of chopsticks on porcelain is music to my ears.

I choose Hong shao niu rou mian, with a spicy red broth and fatty, squidgy slowcooked lumps of beef that fall apart with languorous ease. The noodles are soft and plump and just-chewy, the broth rich, dark and resonant. Add a splash of vinegar and a whack of fierce chilli paste. The slurping here is gentle but assured. Next to me, an old man sips and sighs with joy: meat goes first, eaten with serious concentration; noodles next, then broth. His joy is contagious, this modest bowl of soup sublime. For me, this simple bowl contains the very essence of Taiwan: foreign roots; democracy; generosity; straight-talking flavours; subtle punch; love; and skill at the hob. And an obsession with getting things right. Time and time again.

Taipei might not be the most seductive of cities. It doesn't fight to lure you in, or tempt one with illicit thrills, but this beauty comes from within. Taiwan's strengths are its people, its food, its huge and generous heart. I was genuinely sad to leave. Taipei's charms might be subtle but, no doubt about it, they definitely grab you by the gut.

Tom Parker Bowles stayed at the Mandarin Oriental, Taipei. Rooms from £360 per night. Information and bookings, +886 2 2715 6888; mandarinoriental.com/taipei

Mmm... delicious

Is this powdered shake really the food of the future?
Will Self spends five days on Soylent



Photograph by

Benedict Morgan

Day one

My LATE MOTHER USED TO NOTE DOWN whimsical little signs she spotted about the place. She cherished one she once saw in a café window reading: "Come in and eat before we both starve". But relished still more this example of mordant humour: "Watership Down: you read the book, you saw the film — now eat the cast!", which was posted beside some little brown furry corpses dangling in a butcher's shop. Well, when it comes to this week's bizarre experiment, I'm riffing off both Mum's signs: I'm eating — or rather slurping — simply in order to stay alive, with no hope of any pleasure or satisfaction. Moreover, the stuff of my life for the next few days is Soylent; a real-food substitute originated by a weirdo Yank software engineer called Rob Rhinehart, which is named after a fictional food substitute that appeared in a 1966 science fiction novel by Harry Harrison called Make Room! Make Room! In the book, Soylent, a combination of soya and lentils, is dispensed to the 35m inhabitants of a chronically overpopulated New York in the year 1999. Seven years after it was published, the book was adapted for the screen as Soylent Green, and the dystopia it envisaged was pushed a little further into the future - 2022 to be exact — while the eponymous food substitute was much more sinister, being compounded of mashed-up human corpses. (Reflecting on the circularity of this makes me think of a poultry-keeping friend who once vouchsafed: "If you want a chicken with a really chickeny taste, the best thing to feed it on is... chicken.")

Anyway, I'm of an age such that I have indeed read Harrison's book, seen the film (starring beefcake Charlton Heston and Edward G Robinson, who reached his own expiration date shortly after the shoot wrapped) and now I am eating — at least figuratively speaking — the cast. And if you think figurative eating doesn't quite cut it you ought to reflect on this: we live in a country with a state church, the most important ceremony of which involves a man in a dress hocus-pocusing a desiccated wafer and some gutrot wine "symbolically" into the flesh and blood of a Jewish prophet who died a couple of thousand years ago. Fiction really doesn't get much less scientific than that.

Before going on with this gooey diary, I've paused to take a slurp of my morning Soylent. It comes in foiled-plastic sachets, each containing 600g of beige-green powder, enough for three, um, square meals a day - or so Rhinehart claims. You simply mix the powder with water and drink it. As to what it tastes like... well, exactly as you'd expect: slightly sweet, a touch salty, with the consistency of a cheap milkshake and a faintly unpleasant processed aftertaste. Rhinehart describes this pas amuser la bouche as "non-specific"; intelligence naturally leading you, the curious reader, to enquire: What the fuck? Why on earth are you abandoning your usual diet of Auvergne truffles, foie gras and Colchester No1 oysters for this hateful slop? To which the only possible response is the truth: I'm not that keen on food and rather wish it were only an optional requirement for the maintenance of human life.

No, really, I mean it. Although it isn't so much food itself that turns me off, but rather the ghastly foodie culture now dominating contemporary Britain, making Jamie "lovely jubbly" Oliver a sort of king-in-waiting, pulling his pukkah pork in the shadows until Her Maj's bill arrives and her Uber-carriage rolls under the porte cochère.

Nowadays, everywhere you look there's a new chichi restaurant or organic food shop, while middle-class, middle-aged people (of whom I have the misfortune to be one) talk of little else but the last artisanal, low-fat brioche they managed to cram into their hammy faces. Moreover, it's difficult not to conclude there's something a wee bit infantile about a culture quite so preoccupied with what it puts in its mouth, especially when you consider this perfect soufflé or that magisterial boeuf en daube is only shit waiting to happen. Obviously, the sanest response to such crazed decadence is to pack the whole sordid business in which is what I've been doing for years now, slowly phasing out consumption. True, I've always been pretty svelte, and lately the whole-body fatsuit of middle age isn't a garment I wished to don — so, in recent years, I've become pleasingly cadaverous. If the Soylent experiment goes well, I'm hoping to rarefy my intake to the point where it disappears in a puff and I join those celestial beings known — for obvious reasons — as "breatharians", who exist solely on prana, the vital force of Hinduism. And when I get there, the excla $mation \ "No \ shit!" \ will \ become \ a \ simple \ description. \ Bliss.$

Still, whatever my enthusiasm for the food-free lifestyle, I've bridled at the Soylent experiment. I ordered a week's supply at the beginning of the year, but the box has been sitting unopened in the corner of my office for months. It's so radical not eating — and so destructive of the day's structure, especially if, like me, you work alone. Giving up smoking is bad enough, since cigarettes divide time into useful little segments, but without mealtimes will there be any time at all? Perhaps I'll find myself in a featureless and infinite realm — an empty eternity for a hollow stomach. And what of other people, how will they react to my committed innutrition? It's bad enough when you refuse thirds — let alone firsts. Ah well, I'll tell you tomorrow morning when nothing but Soylent and water will have passed my lips for 24 hours.

Day two

I realise that I never said anything about the ingredients of the greenish gloop in the foaming beaker sitting beside my computer keyboard — how can they be keeping me alive? And not only that, why does Soylent give me such a convincing sensation of plenitude, as if I'd eaten a whole roast suckling pig and washed it down with a hogshead of ale? I discovered this weird "fullness" as soon as I began Soylent-tippling yesterday, and I admit I did look at the ingredients in an effort to puzzle out how a load of modified food starch, soy lecithin, algal oil powder, salt, cellulose and our old friend xanthan gum — together with a bunch

of other substances — could combine to create such a peculiar sensation. However, I soon abandoned this quest — after all, if there's anything more hateful than a foodie, it's a health foodie. Besides, as I continued Soylent-tippling throughout a long day's work, it occurred to me: the reason I was looking forward, first to my Soylent "lunch" then to my Soylent "dinner", was that, deprived of any other sustenance, I'd begun to project on to this uncomely slurry all of my weird feelings about its close relation: food.

It helps that I begin most weekdays cooking an American-pancake-and-bacon breakfast for my two younger sons, using a recipe handed down to me from my late mother, the sign collector. This invariably plunges me into food nostalgia, and since yesterday - and now this morning - all I had was Soylent, it became mysteriously infused with the flavours, and even the consistency of mouthfuls of mulched pancakes and maple syrup. The same thing happened at lunchtime yesterday: deprived of anything to gnash, nibble and thoroughly frottage prior to ingurgitation, I began longing not for the crappy milkshake but my Jewish mother's milk: all the foods of childhood arrayed themselves in the air before me, the hamburgers and the chopped liver, the smokedsalmon bagels and the chicken soups. Not, you appreciate, that I actually was hungry for these comestibles - I was full of Soylent, after all - but nonetheless, reader, they troubled me.

By mid-afternoon I was beginning to think I wouldn't make it and this surprised me, because I've fasted in the past. I did the Yom Kippur fast a few times when I was younger, not because my family was observant, but purely in order to fit in with Jewish friends and their families. I've done the same thing for Ramadan: kept it in order to keep a Muslim friend company. But, of course, I haven't been fasting at all during the Soylent experiment, only fake fasting, and somehow that's worse because there's all the featurelessness of days without meal-breaks, but none of the virtuousness of self-denial. I only pushed myself through the evening and on to bed with auto-hypnotism: "Mmmm, Soylent," I kept saying. "Yummy Soylent, tasty Soylent, nourishing Soylent! Mmm-mmm! What could be finer?" And then by actually depriving myself of my evening "meal" - postponing it until I felt genuinely hungry.

Day three

Yesterday, as on day one, I "ate" pretty much alone; while the family got on with their primitive noshing, I luxuriated in the extra time gifted me by magnificent Soylent! Actually, this is utter bull-crap (I've never typed the word 'bull-crap' before in my life, but it's the sort of epithet I associate with daring innovators like Rob Rhinehart). I tend to eat breakfast solo anyway, and use the time for work reading. As for lunch, it's taken at my desk while writing. True, yesterday evening and on Monday, I took my place at the

dinner table armed with my beaker of sludge, but as none of the family took the slightest interest in my experiment, I soon wandered off and back to work. Obviously it helps that I'm something of a workaholic to begin with, but I've begun to wonder if Soylent consumption alone could turn the most lackadaisical of folk into compulsive typists. It's a disturbing thought.

I've also begun to grow irritated even by the minimal preparation that Soylent requires. For a convenience "food" it's surprisingly, um, inconvenient: the sachets aren't easy to open, and when I pour the powder onto the scales to measure my 200g allocation exactly, some invariably goes adrift. While this is a nice reminder of my time working as a chemist for the Medellín cartel, it's nonetheless annoying. It's the same with whizzing the stuff into a shake: either my blender isn't up to scratch or Soylent is particularly resistant to dissolution. There is a third possibility: just as I've started to attribute all sorts of savouriness to the sick-inducing Soylent, so I've begun to invest its preparation with Nigella-esque significance. Perhaps I should dip my nadgers in the protein-enriched porringer before I start slurping?

This brings me neatly enough to the matter of sex. Now that we have methadone for a heroin substitute, nicotine gum as a tobacco substitute and Soylent understudying food, perhaps it's time someone invented a sex substitute that's equally effective. Possibly it'll be some kind of masturbation enhancer, although unlike oldstyle wanking — which tends to inflame our lust rather than dampen it — new SoySex will make you feel as if you've had a bout of mucosal calisthenics even when you haven't. No need for all those messy emotional complications or the rotten stench when it all dies horribly — SoySex will make you feel fulfilled and loved, all for a tenner a day!

Day four

OK, I appreciate I was getting a little wiggy towards the end of yesterday, but not eating will do that to man. Not eating and, still more pertinently, not eating in a fancy restaurant. I had a dinner last night I couldn't get out of; the wise thing to do would've been to whizz up a Soylent shake and drink it before I went, but I couldn't resist the prospect of sitting in Le Caprice with a CamelBak full of Soylent under my immaculately tailored raw-silk shirt, taking little sips as I observed my dining companion shovel all manner of sweetmeats into his cargo-hold-sized mouth.

I'd hoped that he or the maître d' or the waiter or anyone in fact, would've noticed my covert feeding. But that's the thing about food: when people are devouring, they're consumed by it. The waiter did ask why I wasn't eating, and when I explained I had a rare condition that made it impossible for me to digest anything solid, he laughed like a drain with Soylent gushing through it.

It put me right off my swill... At the time I thought it

Deprived of any other sustenance, I'd begun to project on to this uncomely slurry all of my weird feelings about its close relation: food

was his callous merriment, but when I got home I realised it had happened: like the true manorexic I am, I'd begun to control my Soylent intake. You heard me — I was feeling a little bloated by the full 600g a day and had, albeit unconsciously, begun cutting down. The absurdity of seeking to restrict a diet that consists solely of one not especially palatable item isn't lost on me, but that's the sort of crazy guy I am! I feel virtuous when I put my thrice-daily beige-green smoothie back in the fridge unfinished, and have already started planning my "reduction cure": cutting my Soylent ration by 50g a day, with the aim of being "food clean" in another 12, whereupon Vishnu, the great creator-destroyer god of Hinduism, will break out a six-pack of prana.

Some of you may be worried that a Soylent diet will imperil your physical fitness. Let me reassure you: my own stamina and strength have been completely unaffected. Throughout the experiment, I've kept to my usual punishing "iron-lung" regime of regular jogs to the ashtray. Actually, such is the monotony of days undivided by mealtimes, I've been jogging to the ashtray still more, so there's every likelihood I'll finish my five days on Soylent fitter than when I started. Thank you, Soylent! Thank you, Rob Rhinehart!

Final day

People I've talked to about Soylent are often slightly appalled by the notion that someone would name a real-food substitute after a fictional one, devised to feed a vast population in an environmentally devastated future. To my way of thinking, the arrival of Soylent on our shelves is simply an indication such a future has arrived, with this perversely dystopic twist: the food substitute isn't a state handout, but a branded product.

It's the final day and, all right, I'll admit it: I'm fed up to the back of my underused teeth by the muck, which is probably why I've been cutting down. All that stuff about becoming a breatharian was just, y'know, stuff. The truth is, I've always known hunger is the best seasoning and that my rejection of food is a pose to *épater* the fat bourgeois fucks. I confess, I've been sitting here planning my get-out-of-jail meal, and wondering how it will feel to crunch and pick and crumble again, instead of simply slurping stuff up then jetting it out like a man-sized mollusc.

That was my way of introducing the question I know has been on the tip of all your food-furred tongues the entire time you've been reading this. However, rather than state the question (and its answer) baldly, I'd like to approach it elliptically. A few years ago I visited the Sir John Soane's Museum in London's Lincoln's Inn Fields. Soane was the architect of the Bank of England and a prodigious collector of stone stuffs rather than foodstuffs — his museum is an astonishing cabinet packed with curiosities ranging from ancient stellae and busts to an odd pair of Chinese animal statuettes sitting on a dusty windowsill. From the information card beside them I learnt that these were models of temple lions, also known as "foo dogs", and that according to Chinese tradition, among the many signs of their auspiciousness is their strange ability to eat as much as they want, but never gain weight, and, still more importantly, excrete. Yes, for the foo dog, food isn't shit waiting to happen at all — it's just yummy stuff they put in their mouths and damn the consequences.

Naturally, I was interested to discover what the impact of Soylent would be on my digestion. In the Communist Manifesto, those inauspicious foo dogs, Marx and Engels, typified capitalism's revolutionary character thus: "All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind." I'm pleased to report that Soylent is just as revolutionary, because all that is liquid turns into solid. Yes, you heard me: you still shit perfectly normally when you're living solely on a diet of this jade jizz-juice, and if that doesn't compel us to face our real conditions of life and relations with our kind, I don't know what will.

In the States, Soylent has become a big hit among — you guessed it — Silicon Valley software engineers, who don't want to down keyboards lest they retard the coming Singularity. This unwillingness to stop working and hearken to nature's call is no surprise to me. I remember visiting the Google "campus" in Palo Alto years ago and finding plastic-laminated sheets of coding tips stuck above the urinals in the gents. It may well be this is where Rob Rhinehart got the idea for Soylent. I like to picture him, cock in one hand, tablet computer in the other, noting down the existence of these amusing piss-spattered instructional signs in much the same way that my dear old mother used to note down whimsical ones.

And there's a kind of symmetry in this, because for the past five days, in a manner of speaking, Rob has been my mummy, dispensing the milk of life to me from his mammary sacks. Poor old Rob, he only had the whole food-substitute market to himself for a short while — already there are Soylent copies on the market, with names like Schmoylent, Schmilk and People Goo. The first two sound fairly innocuous, but the US Food and Drug Administration should probably take a close look at the latter's ingredients, given that fact is almost always stranger — and more homicidal — than fiction.

Once more with feelings

His last James Bond movie, Skyfall, is the most successful British film ever. (No pressure, then.) As he prepares for the release of the follow-up, Spectre, **Daniel Craig reflects** on a decade in which he has redefined the once cartoonish secret agent as a symbol of masculinity for the modern age: embattled, conflicted, but still standing, still ready to take on the world







Black suede bomber jacket, £495, by John Varvatos. Navy cotton T-shirt, £60, by Orlebar Brown. Dark blue denim jeans, £235, by Frame at mrporter.com



DANIEL CRAIG WOULD LIKE A BEER.

A cigarette, too. Not, he says, that he's back on the fags full-time, but a man can cut himself some slack now and then. It's a Wednesday afternoon in July. Craig filmed his last scene for Spectre, the new James Bond film, the previous Saturday, on a lake in Bray, in Berkshire. ("A bit of an anticlimax," he concedes.) Since then he's been knuckling down to his publicity duties. He went straight from the wrap party into three days of PR: posing for the movie poster, mugging for promotional photos that will be packaged and sent out to the global media, divvied up between rival broadcasters and papers and websites and magazines less fortunate than our own. Tomorrow he sits for an all-day junket at a central London hotel: round-table interviews and brief oneon-ones (some as long as 10 whole minutes) with reporters from around the world.

No one who has worked with Craig before — me included — would mistake him for someone who revels in the marketing of movies. He does it with good grace but it remains a necessary evil, something to be endured rather than embraced. So now, unwinding from a day of it, he figures he's earned a lager and a smoke.

We are sitting, he and I, on plastic chairs at a wooden table on an otherwise empty roof terrace in East London. Beneath us, the trendy loft apartment hired for the afternoon as the location for the *Esquire* shoot. As luck — by which I really mean cunning, my own cunning — would have it, there are cold beers in the fridge, and Craig's publicist has a pack of Marlboro Lights she's happy for us to pilfer.

So I flip the lids from two bottles of Peroni, he offers me his lighter — encased in a spent bullet shell from the set of a 007 gunfight — and we ash in a bucket. It's warm out but the sky is glowering, threatening rain. When it comes, almost as light as air, we sit through it, neither of us acknowledging it's falling. Soon we call down for more beers and more beers are brought, fags are lit, and Craig leans back in his chair and talks.

I don't think I've known him this relaxed before. Not in an interview, certainly. I've met Craig on a number of previous occasions. And this is the third time he's talked to me for an Esquire cover story, in four years. (Beat that, The Economist.) He's always courteous and cooperative and professional. He's always thoughtful and considered and drily funny. But he has a stern countenance and there is a steeliness to him that discourages flippancy. Though not, happily, caustic wit: my favourite Craig line from an interview I did with him came in 2011, when he was promoting a film called Cowboys & Aliens and I'd had the

temerity to ask him what it was about: "It's about cowboys and fucking aliens, what do you think it's about?" OK, fair enough; stupid fucking question. But did I mention that he's drily funny?

It's 10 YEARS SINCE DANIEL CRAIG was announced as the sixth official screen incarnation of Britain's least secret agent, following, as every schoolboy knows, Connery, Lazenby, Moore, Dalton and Brosnan. It's fair to say the news of his casting did not occasion impromptu street parties up and down the nation, or thousands of British parents naming their first-born sons Daniel (or, indeed, Craig) in his honour.

By almost universal consent, Craig was too young, too blond (too blond!) and not nearly suave — or, perhaps, glib — enough. The man himself seemed somewhat discomfited, too. He had spent the previous two decades building a career for himself as an actor of ferocious intensity, a specialist in wounded masculinity on stage and screen, in the kind of plays — A Number — and films — Sylvia (2003), The Mother (2003), Enduring Love (2004) — that most fans of big budget stunts-and-shunts movies hadn't necessarily seen, lacking both opportunity and inclination, and perhaps imagination.

Even Sam Mendes, Bond aficionado and director of *Skyfall* and *Spectre*, recently admitted he originally felt the casting of Craig could have been a mistake. Crazily, in retrospect, the feeling was he was too serious an actor, too searching, too saturnine. Our expectations of Bond, after decades of increasingly preposterous hijinks and larky one-liners, were hardly stratospheric. The franchise, once seen as cool, even sophisticated — though never, until recently, cerebral — had become a corny joke.

"Austin Powers fucked it," was Craig's typically bald appraisal of the situation pre-2006, when I talked to him about it last time. In other words, the films had gone beyond parody. "By the time we did Casino Royale, [Mike Myers] had blown every joke apart. We were in a situation where you couldn't send things up. It had gone so far post-modern it wasn't funny any more."

Craig changed all that. His Bond is hard but not cold. He's haunted by a traumatic childhood. He is not inured to violence; cut Craig's 007 and he bleeds. And he loves and loses, in spectacular fashion.

First in *Casino Royale* (2006), which was as much tragic romance as action thriller, and in which Bond — Ian Fleming's "blunt instrument" — was revealed as painfully vulnerable, physically and emotionally.

"I would ask you if you could remain emotionally detached, but I don't think that's your problem, is it, Bond?" Judi Dench's M asks him in that film. It turns out to be precisely his problem. He falls in love with a woman who is his equal in every way, including the tormented past. "I have no armour left," he tells her, "you've stripped it from me." But he can't save her. That story continues in *Quantum of Solace* (2008), a revenge drama-cum-chase movie, albeit one hobbled by a Hollywood writers' strike. Craig played Bond as grief-stricken and fuelled by righteous anger.

Skyfall (2012), described by Craig and Mendes as a return to "classic Bond", reintroduced many of the gags and much of the glamour familiar from earlier films, as well as beloved characters — Q, Moneypenny — previously conspicuous by their absence from Craig-era Bond. But it also developed the theme of Bond in extremis: shot, presumed drowned, then ragged and cynical, and entangled in a weird Oedipal psychodrama with Javier Bardem's cyber-terrorist and Dench's mummy figure, M.

The cartoonish elements — the exotic locations, the evil megalomaniacs, the fast women, the suicidal driving, the techno

know another way to do it. However big and grand it is, however boisterous the script is, you look for the truth in it, and you stick to that, and then you can mess around with it. And if you have that *and* you have the car chases and the explosions as well, then you're quids in. But there have to be consequences. He has to be affected by what happens to him. It's not just that he has to kill the bad guy, there has to be a reason for it."

The last time Craig and I talked matters Bond was in the summer of 2012, and the topic at hand was the imminent release of *Skyfall*. I wrote then that everyone involved I spoke to exuded a sense of quiet confidence. This is not always discernible in the nervy run-up to a big budget release.

Still, even the most gung-ho 007 cheer-leader could not have predicted that the film would be quite as successful as it became. Released that October, it made \$1.1bn worldwide — nearly twice the amount of Casino Royale or Quantum of Solace, both of which did extremely well. At the time of writing it's the 12th highest-grossing film of all time. In the UK in particular, it did

classy Hollywood auteur: (American Beauty (1999), Revolutionary Road (2008). It was Craig, who worked with Mendes on his gangster film Road to Perdition (2002), who first approached the director to do Skyfall, and he had to use his powers of persuasion again for Spectre.

On *Skyfall*, Craig tells me, "I felt like [Mendes and I] got into a real groove with it. I felt like we'd started something on that movie and I was so keen to finish it." At first the director was resistant — he had other work on — but Craig and the Bond producers waited, and again got their man.

"We did have the conversation: it's got to be bigger and better," Craig says. "The stunts, the action, every department." He holds out his palm, flat. It's shaking. "I'm all jangly at the moment because it's over. Sam has to lock the picture off for 7 September, so he's got fuck-all time, basically. That's it. Can't go back and do it again. Tough shit."

He doesn't want to jinx it but, "I feel like we've all done our absolute fucking best and that's a good feeling. Whether that makes a better movie we'll see."

Spectre benefits not only from the return of the star and director of Skyfall but also from the work of veteran Bond producers Barbara Broccoli and Michael G Wilson, and writers Neal Purvis, Robert Wade and John Logan. Ralph Fiennes returns as Mallory, the new M; Ben Whishaw as Q; and Naomie Harris as Moneypenny. Replacing director of photography Roger Deakins is the terrific Dutch cinematographer Hoyte van Hoytema, the man responsible for the look of Christopher Nolan's Interstellar and Spike Jonze's Her.

Is the "classic Bond" ethos still in place, I wonder? "Times 10!" Craig almost shouts, momentarily revelling in his role as hype man. He repeats it when I laugh, holding his beer in the air. "It's *Skyfall* times 10!"

And that is a point he is keen to make. For all the soul searching, he says, Spectre is "a celebration of all that's Bond". There is a new supercar, the Aston Martin DB10. There are beautiful women, played by the va-va-voom Italian bombshell Monica Bellucci and the kittenish Léa Seydoux. There are signature set pieces: a thrilling opening in Mexico City; a car chase through Rome; action sequences in the Austrian Alps, in Tangier and in London. There's a thuggish henchman (the first of Craig-era Bond) played by the former wrestler Dave Bautista. And there's an evil megalomaniac, played by the great Christoph Waltz, devilish star of Quentin Tarantino's Inglourious Basterds and Django Unchained.

There has been chatter that Waltz plays Bond's most notorious adversary, Ernst Stavro Blofeld, the comical, cat-stroking,

Craig's summary of the feeling among the filmmakers as they began to discuss a follow-up to Skyfall: "What the f**k are we going to do?"

gadgetry — were back, but Craig's moody intensity was very much present and correct. He doesn't do a lot of sunny romcoms. His characters, Bond included, tend to be somewhat wracked.

"You meet somebody who is at the best part of their life when they're really happy and everything's great, I'm not sure how interesting that is cinematically," he says. The essence of drama is conflict, and Craig's Bond is nothing if not conflicted. Apart from anything else, he keeps trying to resign his commission.

When he was first sent the script for *Casino Royale*, in 2005, Craig tells me now, "I had been prepared to read a Bond script and I didn't. They'd stripped everything back and I went, [approvingly] 'Oh, shitl' It felt to me they were offering me a blueprint, and saying: 'Form it around that.' And I went, 'OK, I can do that.'

"I'm a huge Bond fan," he says. "I love James Bond movies, and I love all the old gags and everything that goes along with that. No disrespect to what happened before but this is completely different. It's got weight and meaning. Because I don't

phenomenal and quite unexpected business. It is the highest grossing film released here and the only movie ever to take more than £100m at the British box office.

Craig's summary of the feeling among the film-makers as they began to discuss a follow-up to *Skyfall*: "What the fuck are we going to do?"

"I think everyone was just daunted, understandably," he says. "Like, it's 'the biggest British movie of all time'. What does it fucking mean? Where do we go from there? How do you process that? It could have been an albatross around everyone's necks. It turned out not to be, but there was a massive amount of pressure at the beginning."

Skyfall's success he puts down to simple things. "Someone who has just made a six-and-a-half-million dollar movie and is struggling to get it distributed will probably argue that if you've got 200 fucking million dollars you can fucking sell anything, but that's not actually true. There's lots of flops out there. I just think [Skyfall] had a tight story, great action. I genuinely think it's a good movie."

He also pays tribute to the skill of Mendes, the London stage sensation turned



In Casino Royale (2006), above, Craig began his reinvention of James Bond for contemporary audiences. His tragic love affair with Eva Green's Vesper Lynd marked a stark break with his predecessors' approaches



Skyfall (2012), left, was a return to what Craig and director Sam Mendes call "classic Bond"; even the Aston Martin DB5 from Goldfinger was back. There was also another tragic love affair, of a sort, this time with Judi Dench's M



Quantum of Solace (2008), above, picked up where Casino Royale left off, sending Craig's devastated Bond on a hunt for Vesper Lynd's betrayers



In the 25th Bond film, Spectre (right), out in October, Craig's Bond is once again fighting for his life, alongside Léa Seydoux as Madeleine Swann. "Is this really what you want?" she asks him. "Hunting, being hunted? Living in the shadows, always alone?"

Connery-era menace and boss of the shadowy criminal enterprise Spectre.

Actually, Waltz plays Franz Oberhauser. For Fleming fans, that name will ring a distant bell. Franz is the son of Hannes Oberhauser, an Austrian climbing and ski instructor, and friend of Bond's father, who briefly became the young Bond's guardian after the tragic death of his parents — in an Alpine climbing accident, no less.

"A wonderful man," Bond describes him in the Fleming story, *Octopussy*. "He was something of a father to me at a time when I happened to need one."

Hannes Oberhauser was later shot dead by the dastardly Major Dexter Smythe; his frozen corpse was discovered in a melting glacier. Bond took it upon himself to track down his former guardian's killer. So, Waltz's Franz Oberhauser is Bond's foster brother. It seems from the trailer he is a senior operative at Spectre — conceivably still under the control of Blofeld — and possibly was connected to Quantum, another nefarious outfit hellbent on world domination (crumbs!), represented here again by Mr White, familiar to fans of Casino Royale and Quantum of Solace.

In other words, Craig's initial reluctance to let Bond's backstory bleed into *Spectre*—and to cut back on the angst in favour of, as he puts it to me, "more Moore", invoking the jollity of Roger Moore-era Bond—didn't survive much past the first script meeting. "I think I'd just got it into my head that flamboyance was the way forward and fuck it, nothing touched him. But as we got into the story and rooted out the connections, they were too good to leave alone."

When I interviewed Craig for *Skyfall*, I tried him on some supposed plot points and he laughed me almost out of the room. This time he concedes I'm doing better.

But according to him I'm still miles off. I'd read that *Spectre* was the first part of two films. "I don't think so," says Craig. (Then again: never trust a spy.) In fact, he says, if it has any relation to other Bond films, it's as the denouement to the story that began with *Casino*: Bond's determination to confront his past and figure out his place in the world, and MI6's place in the world, and whether he might be able to fashion a life away from all that. "I think we can safely say we've squared all those circles," Craig says.

There has been much speculation that *Spectre* will be Craig's last film as Bond. I thought he'd signed on for two more after *Skyfall*, meaning there would be at least one more after *Spectre*.

"I don't know," he says. He really doesn't know? "I really don't know. Honestly. I'm not trying to be coy. At the moment I can't even conceive it." Would he at least like to do another one? "At this moment, no. I have a life and I've got to get on with it a bit. But we'll see."

UNLESS THERE'S SOMETHING HE HASN'T BEEN TELLING US, Daniel Craig is an actor, not a spy. He is married, to another actor, Rachel Weisz, and he has a grown-up daughter from an earlier relationship. He is 47 years old. He lives quietly, and as privately as you can when you are an A-list movie star and so is your wife. He is often to be found with his head in a book. He likes a few beers now and then. He looks good in a suit but is more often to be found wearing jeans and a T-shirt. He does not carry a gun. If he did, he'd have to put on his glasses to fire it accurately.

"I'm not James Bond," he says, not for the first time. "I'm not particularly brave, I'm not particularly cool-headed. I have the fantasy that I would be good in a certain type of situation, like all of us, and I put those hopes into [playing] him." But Craig also likes to think that his own non-Bondness adds something to his interpretation of 007. "There are bits when he doesn't know what the fuck he's doing, and I like that."

One touchstone for his work on Bond is Harrison Ford as Indiana Jones, especially in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. "The brilliance of that performance is that he's so fallible, to the point of comedy. You know at any time he might fuck up, and that adds to the danger and the excitement and the joy of it."

It's harder to do that with Bond, he says. No one in the audience really believes 007 won't, ultimately, cheat death, defeat the baddie, save the world. But he hopes to borrow at least some of Ford's haplessness. And worse things have happened to Craig's Commander Bond than to Ford's Professor Jones. The love of his life drowned in front of him. His mentor and substitute mother died in his arms. "[Bond] failed," he says, of Judi Dench's character's death at the end of Skyfall. "That was a big decision."

Does he like James Bond, I wonder? "I don't know if I'd like to spend too much time with him," he says. "Maybe an evening but it would have to be early doors. What goes on after hours, I'm not so sure about. But I don't judge him. It's not the job of an actor to judge your character."

Nor does he think it is his job, specifically, to rescue Bond from the critics who see him as a throwback to an earlier, less politically correct era. When I interviewed Craig in 2011, we spent quite a lot of time on what Bond represents as a figure in the culture. What does it say about men — British men especially, but men all over the world, too — that our most potent symbol of masculinity is a lonely, socially maladjusted



Black suede bomber jacket, £495, by John Varvatos. Navy cotton T-shirt, £60, by Orlebar Brown. Dark blue denim jeans, £235, by Frame at mrporter.com. Black leather belt, £265, by Giorgio Armani



White cotton shirt, £270; light grey silk cotton trousers, £570; black leather belt, £265, all by Giorgio Armani. Seamaster Aqua Terra 41.5mm watch, £3,800, by Omega



killer with no family or friends, unable to maintain a loving relationship with a woman and with apparently no life whatsoever outside his work?

"He's very fucking lonely," Craig says now. "There's a great sadness. He's fucking these beautiful women but then they leave and it's... sad. And as a man gets older it's not a good look. It might be a nice fantasy — that's debatable — but the reality, after a couple of months..."

What does it say, too, that Bond is a fantasy figure for a Britain that no longer exists, an Imperial warrior who satisfies the rest of our vicarious appetites — no longer as easily fulfilled as they once were — to travel to exotic locations, execute the natives and then have sex with their women?

"Hopefully," he says, "my Bond is not as sexist and misogynistic as [earlier incarnations]. The world has changed. I am certainly not that person. But *he* is, and so what does that mean? It means you cast great actresses and make the parts as good as you can for the women in the movies."

It's a difficult line to walk, I imagine, to keep the essence of brand Bond, but to update it so he doesn't seem like a dinosaur. "There's a delicate balance to it," he says.

Bond, of course, represents something different to Craig than to anyone else. "For me," he says, "it's an opportunity as an actor to take part in movies that are thin on the ground: where you have a producer, in Barbara Broccoli, who's dedicated her life to this; where you get together a team of people and push them as far as you can; where I can push myself as far as I can. When it boils down to it, if you're going to make these kind of movies you want to be in that atmosphere. It's all you can ask for."

It's BEEN THREE YEARS SINCE we've seen Daniel Craig in a new movie.

In 2013, he acted in a play, on Broadway, with his wife — a very well received revival of Harold Pinter's *Betrayal*, directed by the late Mike Nichols — but between *Skyfall* and *Spectre*, he has done no screen acting.

For a time, he says, especially at the beginning of his Bond career, he felt pressure to prove he was more than a blockbuster hunk.

"I worked a lot before [Casino Royale]. I did lots of things, I worked with amazing directors. I was very relaxed about what I did. I knew I could act." Then Bond happened. "There's kind of a rigidity to it. You're playing this very specific character and everybody starts looking at you in that way, and you're like, 'I'm not that.'

"I did feel like, 'I've got to look like I'm doing other stuff.' But then it was, 'Who for?' So the public think, 'Ooh, isn't he versatile?'"

More recently, he's decided to stop worrying about all that. On *Spectre*, he says, "I relaxed. It was like, 'Fuck it. I'm James Bond, for fuck's sake. So I'll do James Bond.' The fact of it is, it's not a bad position to be in. I used to get asked all the time, 'Don't you worry that you're going to get typecast?' 'And?' I mean, talk about a high-class problem."

In any case, he says, his break from the screen "wasn't because I couldn't get the gigs". He does an impression of a desperate luvvie: "It was just terrible, agent wouldn't answer the phone..."

So, where has he been all this time? "We've got a place in the country, in New York," he says. "There's a lot to do there. I read, I photograph things really badly." I'd noticed him doing just that earlier in the day. "Maybe one-in-a-thousand comes out. I'm working that ratio down."

He has an office in the house. "I try to get there once a day, surf the internet for half an hour." He laughs. "Phew! Knackering." He's being self-deprecating. In reality, he's been working on *Spectre*, on and off, for two 'Isn't this great?' As opposed to, 'Isn't this fucking awful?' But believe me, after the fifth interview of the day, sometimes you're like, 'Get me out of here.' I used to get a bit pissed off about things, and if somebody else gets dodgy with me in an interview now — and it still happens — I'm less likely to say, 'Go fuck yourself.' Now I just laugh, and go, 'Really? Of all the things that are going on in the world at the moment, this matters most?' It really doesn't."

Our attitude to Bond, and to Hollywood movies in general, he thinks, should be, "Let's celebrate this. It's good fun. And of all the industries that make lots of money in the world, yes, the movie industry is a bit crooked and there are some sharks and not very nice people, but it's a fairly open book: you come and see it, we make money. It's not, 'Come and see it and we'll fleece you somehow and sell your house.' We're not bankers. It's entertainment. I think there are worse professions to be involved with."

Will he miss James Bond, when it's another actor carrying the Walther PPK, at the wheel of the Aston Martin?

"I've been left a wealthy man by this. I'm incredibly fortunate. But the day I can walk into a pub and someone goes, 'Oh, there's Daniel Craig,' and leaves me alone, that'll be great"

years, and he's been at it every day for the past six months at least.

There's a chance he won't play Bond again but no chance he'll stop acting. "I don't know what I'd do with myself if I didn't act," he says. He tells me he's made a pledge to himself to be a bit more proactive about work. Watching films over the past year or so he's occasionally thought to himself, "'God, I'd love to meet that director.' And then it's like, 'Oh! I can!' That realisation is weird. Like, maybe if I phone them up they might go for lunch with me..."

All that said, he has no plans. "Nothing at all. But I'm not worried. Not yet."

In 2012, he told me that his transition from jobbing actor to A-list star had not been an easy one. "It threw me for a loop. It really shook me up and made me look at the world in a very different way. It confused the hell out of me. Fame and fortune, for want of a better expression, is fucking scary. I couldn't find a lot of fun in it."

That is another aspect of his life he's learned to be more philosophical about. Of the attention and the hoopla and the press commitments, he says, "You just have to go,

"Yeah, of course I will."

What will he miss most? "Doing the films; just that. You know, it sounds awful but I've been left a wealthy man by doing this. I can afford to live very comfortably. Things are taken care of. Family and kids are taken care of and that's a massive relief in anybody's life. I'm incredibly fortunate. But the other stuff that goes along with it..." He trails off for a moment. "The day I can walk into a pub and someone goes, 'Oh, there's Daniel Craig' and then just leaves me alone, that'll be great."

For now, at least, were he to walk into a pub, people would see James Bond first, Daniel Craig second. And they would not leave him alone. He's made his peace with it, for as long as it lasts.

If it were to be the case that he's shot his last scene as James Bond, would he feel satisfied with what he's achieved? "Immensely," he says. "I've done my best."

And with that we drain our beers, stub out our fags, and head off back to work.

Spectre is released in the UK and Ireland on 26 October and in the rest of the world on 6 November



"Am I the only person who does nicotine by breaking up some all-natural cigarettes, mixing it with baking soda and chewing it? Possibly"

THE FIRST THING IS ENTERTAINMENT.

Provide an opportunity to laugh and to cry. If I can do that, I feel I'm doing something right. And a novel that doesn't do that has problems.

I PROBABLY CARE LESS about stuff than almost anyone I know. I just can't interest myself in having possessions. Last week and this week I'm repainting our guest room, which is a horrible job because it was this bright brick-red when we bought the house and it takes forever to cover that red. It's four coats of paint. And, you know, I could pay someone to do that, but then I'd be the kind of person who paid someone to do that.

I DO FEEL LIKE A LUCKY PERSON, and a small but significant part of my luck was that I was a youngest child. My parents had exhausted their extreme discipline and general mistakemaking on my older brothers and they cut me a lot of slack. So, I didn't have to fight with them the way my brothers did. Older siblings tend to think that the younger ones have it easy and I wouldn't deny it.

My BRAIN REALLY LIKES NICOTINE. I wrote *The Corrections* without nicotine, so I know I can write good books without nicotine, but it really helps me settle down in the morning and just snap into concentration. It was nine years I was fumbling around with *The Corrections* and those were mostly nicotine-free years, whereas when I went back on nicotine, which was when I started working on *Freedom*, I wrote that book in a year.

AM I THE ONLY PERSON in the world who does nicotine by getting some all-natural cigarettes and breaking them up and mixing it with baking soda and chewing it? Possibly.

I DON'T THINK I CAN PRODUCE a better-written book than *The Corrections*. It takes a long time as a writer to stop feeling you have to prove you can do it and, after *The Corrections*, I felt I didn't need to do that any more. I still can write a sentence, but I didn't need the sentences to tap you on the shoulder and say, "He can really write a sentence." There's an effulgence to the prose in *The Corrections* that I had a taste for then and I no longer do.

It says something BAD about the national character [in the US] that we have the concept of the "Great American Novel". It's a way in this highly commercial society of saying, "OK, well, that's the product that I'll have to buy and then I don't have to worry about it, because I'll have the best product." So I hate the phrase.

THE SINGLE WORD I ASSOCIATE WITH BIRDS

is joy. I don't know where my interest comes from and psychological explanations seem reductive. I might be inclined to say, "Well, I didn't have children, and birds give me something both to love and to feel responsibility towards and do my best to take care of and to take joy in." I know a lot of birders who do have young kids and they still bird. It's not simple.

A WELL-STRUCK, SLICED BACKHAND is pretty close to heaven. It's a much higher pleasure than you get from writing. Occasionally, I'll wake up at four in the morning having solved a problem while half-asleep and I'll have a sense of exhilaration. But I'm afraid it's closer to the joy of finally getting some shred of meat that's been between your teeth. That's a lower-order joy.

I'M A COMPETITIVE PERSON. I could lie and be "Aw shucks" and say, "I'd love to have my life and not deal with the headache of a certain level of celebrity." But a certain level of acclaim is like points in a tennis game: you either keep score or you don't. I can't help it, even when I'm hitting with a friend and we say, "Oh, we're not counting the games..." I'm counting the games. I could tell you exactly at the end: "Yes, he won seven, I won three."

It's very hard to shut the noise out.

And I don't just mean noise literally. But if you force yourself to sit in a dark room listening to nothing, it is possible to hear what people are *not* talking about. What texting and Facebook and email do is they are welcome distractions from the problem of the self, and all of these submerged desires and submerged fears and unresolved conflicts. And that is where the good fiction lies. It's in that which you are trying to avoid by stimulating yourself with the noise.

A NICE FROSTY GLASS OF GIN from the freezer creates a very distinct boundary between the work part of the day and the part of the day where I lie and watch good cable TV. But I'm very happy having a single small beer these days and it actually turns out to have the same function. And there's a lot more sips you can take than you can from a glass of gin — or you're really in trouble.

SOMEHOW, EVERYONE ELSE has an interesting face but your own is simply this pasty, bland awful thing. Most writers would say that, though Samuel Beckett probably didn't think that, because Samuel Beckett had one of the greatest writer faces ever.

I DON'T THINK OF MYSELF as a technophobe. But that's what encrusted, received wisdom suggests if you dare to point out, for example, that mobile phones are incredibly addictive and that maybe it's worth thinking about the fact that you can't sit still for five minutes without checking for a text. I'm actually pretty good at technology and I use it constantly all day long. I'm not the Unabomber; I don't live in a cabin in Montana.

I HAVE GOTTEN GOOD AT THIS NOW. After this last novel [Purity], I'd been planning not to write a novel again for at least a decade. I felt I was not done, but that I had gone to depths that I did not need to return to. And if I wasn't going to return to those depths, then why would I write another novel? But almost immediately, I started to consider the alternatives in terms of how I spend my time and, in a straightforward, Aristotelian way, shouldn't I be spending my life doing what I'm best at? I don't know if I have gotten better, but I'm in possession of a set of skills that was hard-won and it would be a shame to waste. And maybe I don't need to be out saving the world in some way. 3

Purity by Jonathan Franzen (Fourth Estate) is out on 1 September

Jonathan Franzen, photographed in Santa Cruz, California, July 2015



Read more in our series of What I've Learned interviews at esquire.co.uk



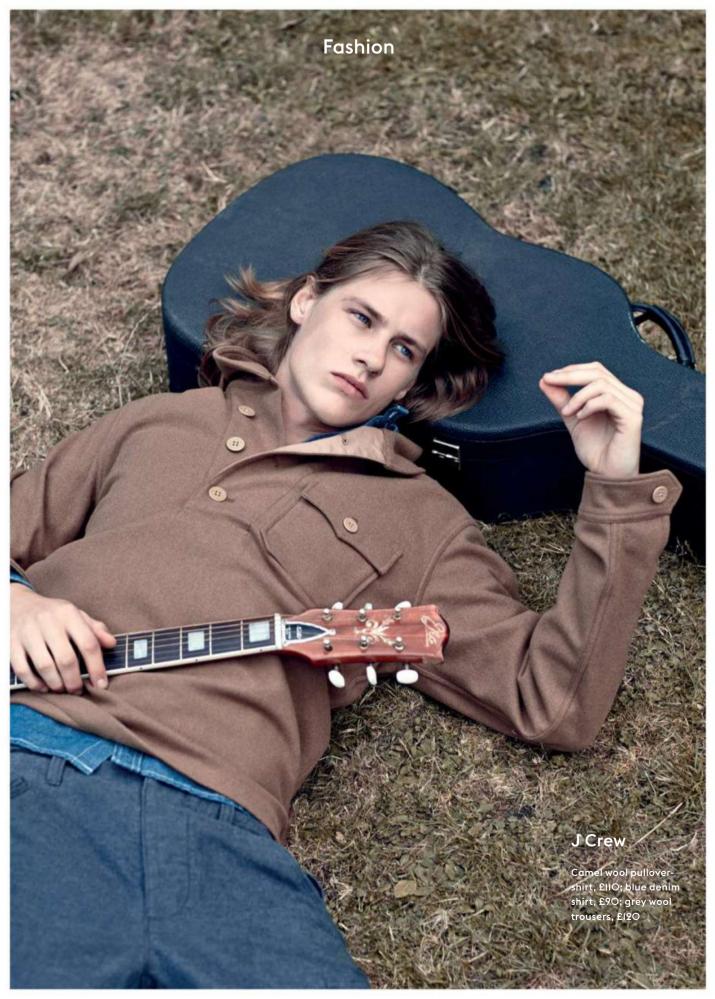






































Out there

Bored of the triviality of modern life, university robotics lecturer Dylan Evans knew just what to do: he sold his house and created a Mayan-inspired, post-apocalyptic refuge in the Scottish Highlands where he and his followers would kill pigs, bury shit in the ground and survive on chocolate bars from Tesco. A sustainable future for Britain or the ultimate midlife crisis?

Esquire investigates

Will Storr

Patrick Leger



ALL DYLAN EVANS HAD TO do was publish a brief outline of his plans on a homemade website. Before long, hundreds of applications had come in, all of them from people wanting to join him in building a new kind of human community on a damp piece of land in the Scottish Highlands. He was a scientist, a specialist in robotics at the Intelligent Autonomous Systems Lab at the University of the West of England, "and I was delighted," he tells me. "I was hoping it would snowball and it did." He sold his house, quit his job and, on 1 July 2006, headed out on the long drive to Scotland's remote Black Isle. "Yes! This is it, man!" he thought, as he bombed up the M1. "I'm kicking the dust from my feet! I'm never going to look back!" The midsummer sun was still high when he arrived. The sky was huge and the land sloped down towards the Moray Firth, whose waters glittered up at the snowpeaked mountains in the distance. He had £100,000 from the sale of his house and the most profound adventure of his life just beginning. "This is amazing!" he thought. He would call the place Utopia.

Just over a year later, he'd be waking up in a mental hospital.

The IDEA FOR THE UTOPIA PROJECT had come to Dylan in Mexico, back in 2005. The trip to South America had come at a time of increasing anxiety about his job. He'd fallen into robotics, back in 2001, after a chance meeting at his mum's birthday party. "One of her friends' husbands had been headhunted by the mechanical engineering department of Bath university to set up a new unit in biomimetics," he says. "He was looking for someone. I could talk the talk because I'd read all of the relevant papers." But the walk had proved more difficult.

"He blagged that job," Dylan's sister, Charlotte, tells me. "My mother and I couldn't believe it. He comes from the arts field. He just reinvented himself overnight as a scientist. I was gobsmacked."

Because of the holes in his knowledge, he spent the first two years at the unit learning what he should've known in the first place. "I then managed to blag my way into a job as a lecturer of robotics at the University of the West of England," he says. He'd been there two years when, in September 2005, he rounded off a business trip with

a visit to the Yucatán Peninsula where he toured the Mayan ruins. As he walked alone he became overwhelmed with an understanding that everything he was doing in the UK was preposterous. "This high-tech world I was believing in, what relevance did that have in this country where most people lived off the land?" he thought. "They could barely make ends meet and what was I doing? Building robots. It was ridiculous, self-indulgent."

He was surrounded by the ruins of the ancient Mayan civilisation, once mighty, now collapsed. But some of the Mayans, he discovered, survived this apocalypse. "They went into the jungle," he says. "You can still see them in Guatemala today. More than 50 per cent of the population is indigenous Mayan." He began to wonder, what if our modern civilisation imploded like theirs had? Could he survive? He began reading books which argued that, through our reliance on diminishing supplies of oil, this kind of catastrophe might be close. "It gradually morphed from being, 'I wonder if it could happen' to, 'It's going to happen.""

Back in the UK, the murk churned inside him. Why was he feeling so bad? The more he thought about it, the more he realised it wasn't him that was the problem, but the world. He'd tell himself, "We're living in this turbulent technological system, which is crushing our humanity by making us live in an unnatural way." He was daydreaming, more and more, about an experiment in seeing what would happen if we had to start all over again. The picture of Utopia became clearer in his mind. "During the day we'd be working in the fields or hunt or fish or weave," he says. "Then in the evenings we'd all eat together and share food." And Dylan would be the guru. "I'd be charismatic but in a calm, dignified way," he says. "People would be drawn to this community by my ideas, personality and vision." But Utopia wouldn't be some silly hippy commune. He was a scientist. This was a serious experiment that would examine how a group of people might cope following an apocalypse.

The more he thought about the end of civilisation, the more convinced he became it was going to happen. That churn within him was a response to the churn of misery out in the world, the enslaved masses, toiling their way towards their own destruction. He began to withdraw from friends and

family. Rather than spending Christmas with his mum, he went to Goa. "I remember looking at the lights of London as I was flying back, and thinking, 'All of these ants are going to die soon. It's dark, it's horrible and it's all going to collapse.' I'm not proud of it, but that's how I was thinking."

He started worrying about what would happen to his loved ones when the end came. Charlotte was a lawyer who lived in west London. How would she survive the looting and violence? How would she escape? He phoned her and told her to buy a horse.

"What are you talking about?" she said. "Where do I keep a horse in Notting Hill?"

"I don't know," said Dylan. "Maybe there's a paddock nearby."

Soon afterwards, they met with friends at a pub in the City of London. He told Charlotte he was going to quit his job and sell his house to fund the Utopia experiment. Charlotte pleaded with him to keep the property and plan the adventure in a sensible way.

"If you're inviting people you don't know to live with you, you need some basic rules," she said. "What if one of them sues you?"

"No, no, no," said Dylan.

"Why do you have to sell your house? You can probably get a grant from the EU for this kind of idea," Charlotte said.

"That's typical!" shouted Dylan, "Thinking about how the system would do it." He would sell his house because to have a plan B was cowardly. "And I'm not a fucking coward like all of you fucking bourgeoisie."

Soon he had permission from the brother of an old university friend, Romay, to use some land on his Black Isle farm. "I loved it in the Highlands," he says. "There's much more of a survivalist mentality up there and it became an ideal symbol of the rejection of the whole Sevenoaks way of life." It also fitted into his apocalypse narrative. "If people were running away from London, Manchester or even from Newcastle, that far north you're still protected from the hordes."

Dylan spent his first few days at Utopia using a scythe to clear bracken from an area next to a river where he planned to erect yurts. He pitched a little tent, cooked food on his stove, and began constructing platforms on which the yurts would sit. He could hardly have been happier. Then his first volunteer arrived.

ADAM WAS A 52-YEAR-OLD veteran of the off-the-grid living scene who travelled from community to community around the country. He'd emailed the Utopia Project website and Dylan had invited him to meet him at the Robotics Lab. He'd arrived wearing a cowboy hat and a British Airways blanket. Dylan had shown him around nervously. "There were masses of red warning

The more Dylan thought about the end of civilisation, the more convinced he became that it was going to happen

"There were three of them sitting in a dingy barn eating a bowl of gruel, which was the remains of a pigeon"

signs about Adam," he says. "But part of me was like, 'You're being hypocritical.' And he's very charming and quite charismatic. Or rather, he can be to a person who's naive." Despite his oddities, Adam's age and experience were reassuring. "There was a father-figure type thing going on. He made me feel safe as well because he had also abandoned all his stuff and left everything behind." What Dylan didn't realise, then, was why Adam kept moving. "He was usually getting kicked out after a month. It took them about that long to discover he was a fucking pain in the arse." (Adam responded to Esquire's request for interview with a video of him playing blues guitar.)

At the beginning, though, Adam was great. He excelled in yurt construction and helped put the first one up, then the second. They began to work on other structures and to clear the land. "It was fantastic." Before long, a routine set in. "The sun comes up early and sets late, so we weren't sleeping for long," he says. "But you sleep really well. There's no traffic, no noise, just the sound of the stream. We'd go to bed with a candle burning, do a bit of reading, wake up, make a cup of tea and some porridge and start work immediately." But it wasn't orderly. "That was part of the problem. There weren't enough people to do everything."

A month in, a new charismatic personality arrived. Agric was another man who was convinced the apocalypse was coming soon. "He was a fully committed doomer," Dylan says. "He knew more about it than I did because he'd been reading internet forums for years. He could back up his gloomy predictions will all sorts of data about the oil and the markets. I thought, 'Fuck, it's great!' Also he knew everything about growing vegetables. Agric was going to be the guy who made sure we actually had food."

Like Adam, Agric was a middle-aged man who'd fled the computer business. "Things move quickly in that world and he hadn't kept up, same as Adam," says Dylan, who's noticed that left-behind coders seem over-represented on doomer forums. "There is something about people who work with computers," he says. "It makes you aware of how pathetic you are. You're good at typing but you become aware of how little you can do apart from that." He believes it's a problem that manifests across his generation.



Dylan Evans today: "Utopia was supposed to be more enriching than the false ideas of effete intellectuals"

"It's about masculinity. Part of the way men have thought about themselves is this ability to not only earn a wage but fix things. My dad was multi-skilled. Good with hands and the brain. But if all you know is technology, what happens when the world ends?"

In September 2006, Dylan turned 40. To celebrate, they killed a pig. "We roasted it," he says. "There was a sense of, 'Wow, we killed this pig and we're eating it!' Those namby-pamby roboticists — you may be able to build a robot but you couldn't do this!"

But in the midst of this self-satisfaction stirred the first winds of trouble — Adam. Dylan had wanted Utopia to be religiously neutral but Adam worshipped a self-designed god he called The Great Spirit. Only Adam could hear the voice of The Great Spirit, who told him, among many other things, that there was no such thing as property ownership, though this didn't stop Adam stashing food items in his yurt. He began using The Great Spirit's commands as an excuse to do whatever he wanted. He declared, "You can ask for help if you need it, and if they feel moved by The Great Spirit, they will. But no orders!"

That winter was hard. "It set in in October," Dylan says. "We put two pot-bellied

stoves into the two small yurts, which was lovely and toasty. But the days got colder and shorter and the rain was horrible. Sometimes it got through the walls of the yurt. Because there were still only a few of us there wasn't a rota to make sure everyone was cooking. I started to lose weight." The hunger, cold and stress of managing Adam began to affect Dylan's mood. "There isn't much you can do in winter. You have to struggle to keep warm, chop wood, make food, keep warm, make fires, chop wood, keep it dry, make fires, go to sleep, chop wood. You're busy but it was boring." This was a shock. It wasn't meant to be like this. "My experiment was supposed to be interesting." As an academic, Dylan was used to the stimulation of constant learning and discussion. "I didn't realise how important that was for me. I'd brought 20 or 30 books as a library, on the theme of collapse and survival. But I'd read all of those already."

But even if there had been new books, he had no energy to read. "My mind started digesting itself. I started panicking and trying to find interesting things to think about." One morning, he noticed wind coming in between the lintel and the side of a barn. "I thought, 'Oh, if I was at home in the Cotswolds I would've gone and bought some sealant and squirted it in!" Then, when Adam took some sheep fleeces he'd bought from a farmer and plugged the gap, Dylan thought, "Ingenuity! Isn't this amazing?" But it wasn't amazing. "Utopia was supposed to be more enriching than the false ideas of effete intellectuals," he says. "This was supposed to be where real thought happens." He had to convince himself it was true. "I'd just seen an old goon stuff wool into a crack and thought, 'Wow."

He'd always said Utopia wouldn't be a commune, but an "apocalyptic experiment about stimulating life". Like that cold and boring wind, the truth about the project he'd given up his job, his house and his money for was seeping in. "This is just another bunch of hippies hanging around in a field, like dozens of shit hippy communes before it."

Even as an experiment on coping with civilisation's end it was flawed. When an 18-year-old volunteer cut his hand with an axe, they took him to hospital. "If this really was a post-apocalyptic scenario what would we have done?" They were buying most of their food from Tesco. To make up for this, they'd assign their shopping a "post-apocalyptic rating". "Baked potatoes were 100 per cent because you could grow potatoes if complex technology broke down. If you had a salad, radishes would be fine, cabbages fine, but tomatoes would be hard to grow in Scotland. So the salad would be 70 or 80." Dylan only wanted to buy 100 per cent



"I was looking for hemlock. It seemed a cool way to go as it was quick and could be mistaken for an accident"

post-apocalyptic-rated goods. But they'd go to Tesco and someone would ask if they could buy chocolate. Dylan would say, "No".

"Oh come on, it's only 25p."

"All right then."

Did he eat some of the chocolate?

"Probably."

More rows erupted when he kept finding another Utopian on Facebook.

THE FIRST DAY OF APRIL, 2006, was a big day in Utopia. It was an open day. Dylan had invited the world to witness his experiment. He'd hoped hundreds, maybe thousands, would arrive. "A chain of cars snaking up the pathway for miles." They got five. They sat in a circle as Dylan, then Agric gave talks. As he stood back to let Agric explain his philosophy, the expressions on their guests' faces horrified him. He saw, in their features, a glimpse of the truth of what he'd created. "I realised what this would sound like to somebody who hadn't been obsessing about it for the past year," he says. "They were like, 'We've been farming this land for years. You've waltzed up here with your money and you think you're going to discover something? You arrogant little southern shit." Dylan's head began to spin. "My heart was beating faster and faster, hoping that Agric was going to stop. But he was going on and on." He had to get out of there. "I ran away and found one of the yurts and curled up into a foetal position. I'm cold and I'm shivering and I'm trying to get sleeping bags, blankets and stuff over me."

There were other problems, too. Dylan's money was running out. Plus, he'd received a letter from the area planning and building standards manager at the Highland Council, accusing them of constructing the camp without permission and instructing them to halt all works or risk "formal enforcement action". Adam was causing ructions with his selfish behaviour. Instead of using the compost toilet, like everyone else, he insisted on going where he fancied, digging a little hole each time and burying it. The place had become a minefield of shit. He kept hinting that he would force a split in the volunteers, with the vegetarians going under his command, via The Great Spirit. One night, Dylan woke to hear whispered voices discussing what to do about Adam's apparent thieving of food.

"We should hold some kind of trial."

"What would the punishment be?"

Dylan thought he heard something about cutting off hands.

"We can't do that, you crazy fucker!" said one voice.

"Why not?" said the other. "It's not as if the police exist any more."

Following the open day, Agric had decided to go back south for a while. But he soon received an entreaty from a volunteer begging him to return. "Someone emailed me to say, 'You'd better come up here to make sure it doesn't fall apart." It was the first Sunday in July. He arrived at Utopia at 7:30pm after a seven-and-a-half-hour drive. The scene that confronted him was a fantasy of misery come alive. "There were three of them in the barn, a dingy place with little natural light," he says. "They were sitting around a table eating a bowl of gruel, which I think was the remains of a pigeon. They were cold, miserable, silent. They looked as if they'd be happy for the world to end right there and then. It was obvious Dylan was malfunctioning. He looked like a hollow shell of the person I knew before."

In fact, Dylan had become suicidal. He'd been fantasising about hanging himself from a tree and jumping off the bridge that links the Black Isle to Inverness. In May, he'd attended a talk by an invited visitor, an expert in plants called Heather. She picked up an edible leaf that, she observed, looked like hemlock and said, "Don't confuse this with hemlock because hemlock is poisonous." Dylan thought, "Oh. So that's what hemlock looks like." He became excited. "I started looking for hemlock. It seemed like a cool way to go because it was presumably quick and could be easily mistaken for an accident." By then, he'd been regularly waking at two or three in the morning. "I'd be really anxious and icy and depressed in the pitch black thinking, 'What the fuck have I done?" He couldn't understand why he'd quit his job and sold his house. The experiment was a farce and it had ruined him.

Months earlier, he'd been convinced that living in nature would cure the mind's troubles. "Antidepressants were there for people fucked up by civilisation," he thought. "If you left civilisation you wouldn't need antidepressants." Now, he made an appointment with his doctor, who referred him to

a psychiatrist. "I talked about my suicidal thoughts," he says. When they offered him a bed on a voluntary basis, Dylan asked if he could think about it. He spent all day in the canteen, changing his mind every few seconds, for hours. At around 4pm, the psychiatrist sectioned him. "I thought, 'This isn't happening,'" Dylan says. "It was as if I'd been told I had cancer. But I was also relieved that the decision had been taken away from me. I could stay there without having to admit I was a failure."

HIS OLD FRIEND, ROMAY, whose brother had provided the land for the Utopia Project, hasn't spoken with Dylan since it all ended. Although she still speaks warmly of him, and hopes their friendship will reconnect, she sounds raw about everything he left behind on the Black Isle. "What he left was a fucking mess," she says. "He's an egotistic little bugger, we know that. But I didn't think he'd shaft me in that way."

Today, Dylan talks of his descent into apocalyptic thinking as if it was a breakdown. He's realised that it wasn't a malfunction in modernity that caused the dark feelings inside him, but a malfunction in his life. "I'd blagged my way into a job that I didn't know much about," he says. "Bullshitting will get you so far." Back in 2005, he'd come to realise that there wasn't any way he could have a career progression without publishing academic papers on robotics. "I'd tried a few times but they were so amateurish." But he couldn't just quit. "I'm an academic. That was my identity." There was a fear of being exposed and humiliated. But in Mexico, and in the months following, he couldn't admit to himself that the stew of doom and panic he was feeling had its source within him. So he externalised it. He convinced himself that the trouble stemmed from his opinion that robotics were self-indulgent and irrelevant. It was a problem with the bourgeois culture of academia, with the entire structure of civilisation.

As well as that, Dylan not only detects the taste of narcissism in his fantasies of being surrounded by followers, but a scent of the cult. "It was narcissistic," he admits. "Cult leaders have to be. I want validation. I want people to adore me."

Perhaps the moment he really touched back down to reality was in the psychiatric hospital, watching a cookery demonstration. Not too long before, he would have thought it pathetic to rely on an electric oven to prepare food. But sitting there, a revelatory thought occurred to him. "What's wrong with using an oven? Maybe, every now and then, you can have a cake." The Utopia Experiment (Picador) by Dylan Evans is out in paperback on 10 September



"Is there anything good about getting older? No. I'd like a young 25-year-old body right now so I can compete with these kids"

I don't know what I might have done

had I not been introduced to golf. I've always had a fascination with the medical profession, maybe I could have been a surgeon and been able to help people.

I THINK MY COMPETITIVENESS came from my older brother. He was three years older, bigger and stronger; I was always trying to beat him at almost everything we did but he was good at a lot of things.

I STUDIED PSYCHOLOGY at college but it really didn't help, even in a mental game like golf. The only thing psychology made me understand was how crazy everybody was.

I DON'T LOOK BACK AT STUFF. When I've failed, it only makes me work harder at correcting the failures. Rationally, if you've failed, you try to figure out why and then you go and work on it. That's how I've always performed.

The best advice I've ever been given

was from my father when I was just a youngster. He taught me how to grip the golf club, turning the Vs of both hands and pointing them towards my right shoulder.

My dad really loved the game with a passion, but my mum was always there in a supportive role, too, as she would knit the headcovers; we'd play golf. My mother could never watch me play though once I turned pro, she got too nervous. And my dad was kind of the same way.

HUMILITY. That's one thing the game of golf can teach you about life. That if you play it long enough it humbles you. It can knock you down a notch. When you think you have it by the throat, it can come back and get you by the throat.

HAVING CHILDREN in life creates a certain level of insanity. Of course, it's a responsibility you have to take 100 per cent seriously, to do the best you possibly can to help them love, to learn to read, to respect other people, to have a good work ethic. There's a lot of things that go into being a parent.

THE WAY GOLF FORGES FRIENDSHIPS is still one of the things I love about the game. It's a great pleasure to go out and play with people you like to play with. It's a special place, to be on the golf course.

THE DECISION COMES DOWN TO YOU ultimately but having a caddie you can trust is important. My old caddie Bruce Edwards was a great supporter of mine, first of all as a friend. He was always honest. If I hit a bad shot he'd say let's find a way. Find a way to get the next shot done. And do it right.

JEEZ. THERE ARE TOO MANY GREAT MOMENTS to look back on. I think from a career standpoint, my finest moment was walking off the 18th at Turnberry in '77 when Jack Nicklaus put his arm around me - having just won the Open by a shot over him. And he said, "Tom, I gave you my best shot but it wasn't good enough. Congratulations, I'm proud for you." That was the time when I felt I really could play and beat the best. When he gave me his endorsement. How he played in the major championships identifies Jack as, for me, the greatest player that ever played the game of golf.

If I could have one shot back in my career, it'd be that eight-footer I had to win the 2009 Open. I hit the worst putt I ever hit. It wasn't even close. I forgot the golden rule in putting, just take it back and accelerate and let the chips fall where they may. And I decelerated on it. Jack [Nicklaus] called me to console me. And who better to console you than someone who is inside the curtain who knows exactly how you're feeling.

I HAVE NO PROBLEM looking back at the 2009 Open these days. If that was the only Open championship that I'd had a chance to win and I'd lost it that way, it would have certainly had more of an effect on me. But I have the luxury of having won a few, so it wasn't the only one.

IT SEEMS THAT EVERY YEAR I can sustain some sort of streak that's acceptable to me, that I play some good golf. I don't play that way very often.

THE THING I LEARNED from my long-time coach Stan Thirsk was how to treat people. He never got upset or said a bad word about anyone. I did. I wasn't as good a man as Stan as far as how he looked at life and people. I learned that was something to aspire to be.

IF I HAD TO CHOOSE just one more hole it'd be the 16th hole at the Kansas City Country Club. It's where I grew up playing and it's the best hole on the golf course. All those wonderful memories playing with Stan, my dad, my older brother. Special, very special.

My dad impressed on me that you should never accept anything but the best in your game. If you hit a shot that was on the toe and it turned out to be good, understand that it wasn't a good shot, it was a lucky shot. But if you hit it square in the clubface and it turned out great, that's what you aspire to.

Nothing is forever. The only constant is change. Sometimes it changes for the worse and sometimes it changes for the better. And you'd better understand and expect that.

How I FEEL NOW to when I first started has changed. I thought if I worked harder than everyone else I'd be a success. I don't work hard now so I can't expect much in return, but when I'm on the course, I try to be the best I can. On the practice tee, the same.

Is there anything good about getting older? Is older and wiser a truism? No. I'd like to have a young 25-year-old body right now to be able to compete with these kids. And I think I could have competed with them.

FOLLOW YOUR PASSION and hope it's something that can support you in life. It's as simple as that.

Tom Watson is a Polo Golf ambassador for Ralph Lauren

Tom Watson photographed at the 144th Open Championship on the Old Course, St Andrews, 2015





Read more in our series of What I've Learned interviews at esquire.co.uk





Lifestyle Essentials



Peter Trainor for Max 'n Chester

Max 'n Chester was created in July 2012 by owner and founder, Peter Trainor in NYC. With Trainor's extensive design and travel background, he decided to launch the collection with a vision and ethos to formulate a collection using his three key influences: fabric, silhouette and design. Easy-wearing luxury fabrics in beautiful silhouettes creating an effortless look that can be worn 24 hours a day. The collection is now selling to better boutiques in North America, Japan and South Korea. For S/S '16, we launched a full women's collection which feeds beautifully from the men's using fabrics from Japan and Europe. Our men's and women's collections are available at Mahna Mahna Showroom in NYC.

maxnchester.com



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Kingsman Leatherware, founded on the principle of quality, produces premium timeless pieces that will last for generations and are guaranteed for life.

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Lifestyle Essentials



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To view the range visit janinaultrawhite.com



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Galet Resort collection

Handmade in France, these 100 per cent canvas, machine-washable loafers by Galet are perfect for this summer. Featuring anti-slip stitched rubber soles, they offer supreme comfort, flexibility and durability.

Galet is a French luxury brand that specialises in casual men's loafers known for their iconic motifs. The shoes are handmade in an atelier outside Paris using traditional techniques passed down for generations.

galet.com



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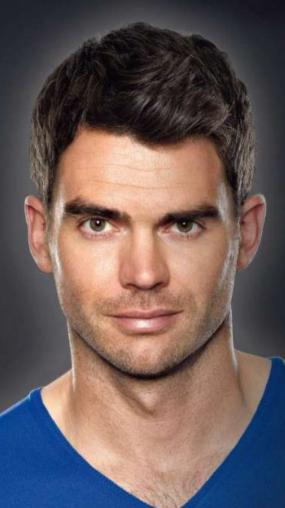


N° 52 Alfred Dunhill Duke holdall

£3,790

dunhill.co.uk

Autumn/winter 2015 is John Ray's third collection for Alfred Dunhill, since taking the creative reins at the label in 2013. Ray's aesthetic is quintessentially British — something for which the house has long been renowned — but he also brings a welcome injection of youthful vigour to the brand. This holdall is the perfect example of Ray's more traditional leaning. Cut from semi-vegetable-tanned leather and lined with cotton, it's just the thing for a long weekend in the country.



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